

THE NOBLE LIFE OF
THE
PROPHET
(PEACE BE UPON HIM)



VOLUME (1)

BY
DR. ALİ MOHAMMAD AL-SALLABİ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.*



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**The Noble Life of
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Volume 1

Dr. Ali Mohammad Al-Sallabi



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INTRODUCTION

Indeed, all praise is for Allah; we praise Him, repent to Him, and seek His forgiveness and help. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our own selves and of our wicked deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can lead astray; and whomsoever Allah leads astray, none can guide. And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, and He has no partner; and I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always), and die not except in the state of Islam (as Muslims) (with complete submission to Allah).” (Qur’an 3: 102)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾﴾

“O mankind be dutiful to your Lord, who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever and All-Watcher over you.” (Qur’an 4:1)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good

deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hellfire and made to enter Paradise)." (Qur'an 33: 70, 71)

Male or female, adult or child, scholar or commoner, businessman or laborer – all Muslims need to study the biography of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. In fact, the fulfillment of many of our Islamic duties hinges upon our knowledge of the Prophet's life. For example, every Muslim should love the Prophet ﷺ; yet how can one love him without knowing him. We were not alive when the Prophet ﷺ was preaching the message of Islam to the Quraish, so the only way we have left to become intimately acquainted with the Prophet ﷺ, and consequently to love him, is to study his sayings and deeds, which give us partial glimpses of his life, or to study his biography, which fits the pieces of his life together, so that we can have an overall view of his ideal character. And how are we to follow the Prophet ﷺ if we do not know his sayings and deeds, or – which is more relevant to his biography – the context in which his sayings and deeds occurred. Thus we are all in dire need of acquainting ourselves with the life of the Prophet ﷺ.

Through the study of the *Seerah* (the Prophet's biography), we are able to appreciate how the Prophet ﷺ was an ideal husband, ideal father, ideal leader, ideal ruler, ideal educator, ideal judge, and so on. So regardless of our situation and who we are, we benefit from studying the Prophet's life. If one has dedicated at least some part of his life to inviting others to Islam (which makes him a *Daa'ee* – a word I will henceforward use – one who invites others to the teachings of Islam), then the Prophet's biography is for him an indispensable guidebook. Through studying the Prophet's *Seerah*, the *Daa'ee* learns about the Prophet's methodology for inviting others to Islam; furthermore, he learns about how the Prophet ﷺ dealt with those who refused to embrace Islam and how he ﷺ was patient when he was made to suffer at their hands, not to mention the countless other lessons and morals he learns from the *Seerah*.

If one is an educator – of children at home or school, or of adults at a community level – one learns how the best educator mankind has ever known raised a generation of true Muslims, who went on to develop the most wonderful civilization that mankind has ever known. The early converts to Islam were educated in the world's finest institution of higher learning – the House of Al-Arqam (the house wherein Muslims secretly met in the early days of Islam) – where the Prophet ﷺ taught them the Qur'an, Islamic beliefs, the manners of Islam, and so on. His students graduated with flying colours, becoming leaders and educators of the following generation of Muslims.

If one is a leader, one learns true qualities of leadership from the Prophet's *Seerah*, in terms of how the Prophet ﷺ was just; how he united the Muslims; how he ﷺ dealt with subversive elements of society, namely the hypocrites, who were headed by 'Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool; and how he ﷺ constantly strove for the betterment of the Muslim nation.

If one is a scholar, one relies on the *Seerah* to understand the Qur'an, for the Prophet's actions represent a practical application of the teachings of the Qur'an. Furthermore, the revelation of many Verses was prompted by actual events that took place during the Prophet's lifetime; a scholar can only understand such Verses if he understands the events for which they were revealed. And in fact (as we will *In Sha Allah* see throughout this book) knowledge of all Islamic sciences – such as '*Aqeedah* (beliefs), jurisprudence, and *Tafseer* – hinges frequently upon knowledge of some aspect of the Prophet's *Seerah*.

If a Muslim inclines towards *Zuhd* (to abstain from worldly pleasures for the sake of Allah ﷻ), he can learn, through the study of the *Seerah*, the difference between true *Zuhd* and extremism, for the correct way to live is the balanced life that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ led. If a Muslim is afflicted by calamity, he can find consolation in the *Seerah*, for no one was afflicted with as much hardship as was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; beyond consolation, the afflicted person becomes encouraged to follow

the example of the Prophet ﷺ and patiently await for his reward from Allah ﷻ. In short, there are valuable lessons to be found in the *Seerah* for every single Muslim.

Not just the Muslim individual, but also the Muslim nation as a whole needs to benefit from the lessons that are available in the Prophet's *Seerah*. Nations rise and fall not through coincidence or through a set of arbitrary occurrences, but through universal laws that have been set in place by Allah ﷻ. At least once in our history, Muslims have succeeded in building a wonderful and stable civilization, and that was during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ and his rightly guided Caliphs; and even if Muslims prospered in later centuries, they never prospered as much as they did in the early golden years of Islam. Now we come back to the universal laws I mentioned above: The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ established a stable and prosperous nation not by chance, but by living in harmony with the said universal laws. What this means is that there is a pattern: If we want to now repeat the success that was achieved by the Muslims during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, we need to be in harmony with the same set of laws, and in doing so, we have an ideal blueprint to follow – the lives of the Prophet ﷺ and his noble Companions ﷺ.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِ مَا حُمِّلَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ مَا حُمِّلْتُمْ وَإِن تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا أَلْبَانُ الْمُبِينِ ٥٤﴾

“Say: ‘Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away, he (the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ) is only responsible for the duty placed on him (i.e., to convey Allah’s Message) and you for that placed on you. If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance. The Messenger’s duty is only to convey (the message) in a clear way (i.e., to preach in a plain way).’” (Qur’an 24: 54)

This Verse clearly indicates that success lies in following the way of the Prophet ﷺ; the following two Verses discuss some of the conditions that Muslims must fulfill if they hope to achieve

prosperity and stability as a nation:

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا
 اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ
 وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن
 كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
 وَاطِيعُوا الرُّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾﴾

“Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e., Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Faasiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allah). And perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), and give Zakaat and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) that you may receive mercy (from Allah).” (Qur’an 24: 55, 56)

We do not have the right to say that it was due to the fact that they were supported by miracles that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were successful in establishing a Muslim country. We do not have that right for the very fact that the first generation of Muslims struggled and suffered and strove and sacrificed – and thus earned their success. They fulfilled the conditions that are discussed in the above-mentioned Verses; or in other words, they lived in harmony with those universal laws that apply to the rise and fall of nations. Consider the Prophet’s migration to Al-Madeenah. Allah ﷻ could have made the journey a miraculous one-night journey, as He ﷻ had previously done regarding the Prophet’s night journey to Jerusalem and then to the heavens. But He ﷻ didn’t, and the Prophet ﷺ subsequently faced all of the hardships that came with his remarkable

migration to Al-Madeenah, thus showing us that victory comes with sacrifice and struggle.

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضي الله عنهم realized *Eemaan* (faith) both in terms of belief and action. They strove day and night to perform good deeds; they made each and every part of their lives an act of worship; they fought against all forms of polytheism. At an individual and societal level, they took all of the material steps that are needed to form a country. Then, they actually did form their own country in Al-Madeenah, and from there, they spread Allah's religion to the farthest corners of the earth.

That we as a nation are behind today is a logical consequence of our not doing what the first generation of Muslims did to achieve success. Unwilling to change, to struggle, to reform, and to sacrifice, we think that we can achieve success and prosperity as a nation; but since that is contrary to the universal laws outlined above, we shouldn't hold our breaths, expecting some sudden change from the outside. The change must begin from within.

Weakness of faith, lack of spirituality, incorrect thinking, inner confusion and anxiety – these are the results of the great gap that exists between us as a nation and between the Noble Qur'an, the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ, and the piety of Muslims during the era of the rightly guided Caliphs.

That gap is nowhere as palpable as it is in regards to those who, though they are as far away as possible from the teachings of the Qur'an, the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ, and the way of the rightly guided Caliphs, claim that they are the representatives of Islam. They speak for hours on end, but show no understanding of Allah's universal laws that apply to the rise and fall of nations. They will speak interminably about the sayings of philosophers, politicians and others of their ilk, but they hardly bother to refer to revealed sources – the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. I do not say that one should not benefit from the experiences and knowledge of others, for wisdom is the goal of the believer: wherever he finds it, he is most worthy of it. But I do most vehemently oppose those who are enamored by the words of intellectuals, but do not heed the

words of Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ; do not contemplate the history of our own nation, especially the part of it when its civilization reached its zenith during the first generation of Islam; and then aspire for positions of leadership among the Muslim nation, so that when they do become leaders, they lead according to their whims and desires, and not according to the teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

The events that took place during the Prophet's lifetime did not occur in a vacuum; they occurred in the real world, which means that we need to study the methodology of the Prophet's *Da'wah* if we are to repeat, at least to some degree, the success achieved by the first generation of Islam. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ۖ﴾ (١١)

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad ﷺ) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much." (Qur'an 33: 21)

What did the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ do that we need to repeat? The answer to this question would require a very long list of details, but let us at least consider a few examples. First, the Prophet ﷺ followed an ideal methodology for educating his Companions ﷺ and for establishing the foundations of a stable country. He ﷺ did not call for an instant revolution, but instead strove for gradual change. He ﷺ began with what is most important: instilling correct beliefs into the hearts of his Companions ﷺ. That a movement, if it is to achieve success and stability, needs to advance forward with studied gradual steps; that, before achieving stability, the members of a given movement need to first patiently endure hardships; that, first and foremost, correct beliefs must be cemented into the hearts of Muslims: these are just a few examples of Allah's universal laws that the Prophet ﷺ submitted to, was in harmony with, and applied. His

Companions ﷺ did their part as well, trying their utmost to learn from him ﷺ and follow his instructions to the letter, so much so that if one of them was unable to spend a given day with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he would send someone in his stead, and then later ask him what he learned that day. And some people – such as is related about ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ﷺ and his companion ﷺ – would take turns going to the Prophet ﷺ; one would spend the day with the Prophet ﷺ, and the other would take care of both of their businesses. In every small and great matter, the Companions ﷺ followed the example of the Prophet ﷺ; it is no surprise, therefore, that they were able to spread the message of Islam to the far corners of the earth.

In this book, I discuss the events of the Prophet’s life, from the day he ﷺ was born – and even before that day for background information – until the day he ﷺ died. Beyond enumerating the events of the Prophet’s life, I have endeavoured to draw lessons and morals from those events, by pointing out to the reader, among other things, the significance of an event, the wisdom behind one of the Prophet’s actions or deeds, the Islamic ruling that is derived from a particular incident, and the impact that a given event should have on our character or choice of deeds.

Furthermore, I have attempted to remedy the problem of how the *Seerah* has been reduced to a limited subject of study in certain schools and among many students of knowledge. This problem resulted from a misuse and misunderstanding of valuable *Seerah* books, books that have been written in recent decades and that have gained widespread acceptance among the reading public – such as *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtoom*, by Safee-ur-Rahmaan Al-Mubarakpooree; *Fiqh-us-Seerah*, by Al-Ghazaalee; *Fiqh-us-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Al-Bootee; and *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abul-Hasan An-Nadwee. Some of these books summarize the events of the Prophet’s life; others either deal with certain aspects of his life or with some of the lessons that can be derived from his life; the point is that none of the above-mentioned authors claims that he has written a comprehensive book on the Prophet’s life.

Some universities use the above-mentioned books as textbooks, and many students have, as a result, come under the impression that those books are comprehensive works on the Prophet's biography. This notion, which is of course dangerous and false, has even gained acceptance among some Imams and leaders of Islamic movements. As a result of this widespread misunderstanding, many people have a very limited and defective understanding of the Prophet's biography. At the end of his book, *Fiqh-us-Seerah*, Shaikh Muhammad Al-Ghazaalee warned about this very notion, saying, "You might think that you have studied the life of Muhammad ﷺ if you have followed the events of his life from his birth until his death. This is a grave mistake, for you will not gain a true understanding of the *Seerah* unless you have studied the Noble Qur'ān and the pure *Sunnah* (of the Prophet ﷺ)"

I spent a number of years of my life studying the Noble Qur'an and the Prophet's biography. Those years consisted of some of the best days of my life; deeply immersed in study, I forgot about the pains associated with being away from home. Pearls of wisdom I came across, lessons I learned, and valuable insights I was blessed to perceive – these enjoyments sustained me. It was during that period of my life that I gathered, organized, and composed the contents of this book.

Throughout my research, I noticed how each author of a *Seerah* book mentioned lessons and benefits that other authors did not mention. It sometimes occurred that Ibn Hishaam mentioned a relevant point that Adh-Dhahabee did not mention, or that Ibn Katheer, a more recent scholar, mentioned what the compilers of the "Six Books" did not mention. As for present day authors, As-Sibaa'ee might have appreciated a point that Al-Ghazaalee was not aware of – or at least did not write about; the examples of this phenomenon are endless. The point is that Allah ﷻ honoured me with the opportunity to gather and combine the findings of past and present authors; the result of that effort is this book.

In bringing this work to fruition, many people from various

countries – Libya, Yemen, Iraq, Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Syria – have made valuable contributions, through discussions, correspondences, and meetings at seminars. Some provided me with rare manuscripts; others provided valuable advice on what themes I should stress; and yet others made various contributions, each in his unique way.

To be sure, I do not claim to have surpassed my predecessors. The stature of the Prophet ﷺ is great indeed; to comprehensively discuss just some aspects of his wonderful character and life requires a researcher with more time, stronger faith, a deeper understanding, and a greater intelligence than I possess. Nor do I claim infallibility, for Allah's protection from error is specific to the Messengers ﷺ and Prophets ﷺ. Whoever thinks that he has all knowledge, even of a particular subject of study, is ignorant of his own self. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾ (٨٥)

"And they ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning the Rooh (the spirit); Say: "The Rooh (the spirit): it is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little." (Qur'an 17: 85)

Knowledge is an ocean that has no shore. Ath-Tha'aalabee said, "Whenever anyone writes a book, he wishes on every day other than the day on which he completed it, to add to it, or to delete from it. That is the effect that one night has; then how about a number of years!" Conveying a similar sentiment, Al-'Imaad Al-Asbahaanee said, "I noticed that whenever someone finishes writing a book, he says on the day after he completed it, 'Had this been changed, it (the book) would have been better. Had this been added, that would have been a welcome (change). Had this been brought forward, it (the book) would have been better. Had this been left off, it would have been more beautiful.' This

(phenomenon) is one of the greatest of lessons (for mankind), for it proves that imperfection has a strong hold over human beings."

I hope from Allah ﷻ that I have done this work sincerely for His Countenance. I ask Him ﷻ to make this book beneficial to His slaves, to reward me for every letter that I wrote, to place this effort in my scale of good deeds, and to reward my brothers who untiringly helped me to finish this book.

"How perfect You are O Allah, and I praise You. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except you. I seek Your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance."

One who is in dire need of his Lord's forgiveness and Good Pleasure.

'Alee Muhammad As-Sallaabee

2001 - 1422H



**From, Some Important Historical
Events Before The Advent Of Islam,
Until, The Beginning Of Revelation**





The Dominant Empires Of The World Prior To The Advent Of Islam

The Roman Empire

The eastern part of the Roman Empire was known as the Byzantine Empire, which ruled over, among other lands: Asia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Northern Africa; and its capital was Constantinople. It was a wicked Empire that subjected its citizens to oppression and wrongdoing. As is almost always the case when an occupying foreign force rules over the native inhabitants of a land, violent tactics were employed to bring the population under control. The empire showed no mercy to the populations they ruled. So desperate did the economic situation become for Syria's inhabitants that people would sell their children and use the proceeds of the sale to pay off their debts.

The Byzantines lived lives that were replete with contradictions. On the one hand, religion was deeply ingrained in people's minds and monasticism was widespread. In fact, it was not uncommon for a common man to enter into deeply arcane religious research. But on the other hand, the population had become engrossed in frivolous, and often outright evil, forms of entertainment. Stadiums that could accommodate 80,000 spectators were built. The main sporting events that took place in them consisted of gladiators fighting one another to the death, and at times gladiators were even pitted against predatory animals. While

such sport was the entertainment of the common man, and while unspeakably cruel punishment was his lot if he committed an offence, the rulers and higher classes lived lives of opulence and decadence.

The Persian Empire

The Persian Empire was greater and stronger than the Byzantine Empire. False religions, such as Zoroastrianism and Mithraism, dominated the lands of Persia. The kings of Persia – the crown would pass from father to son – were extremely corrupt; they acted with impunity because they believed themselves to have been descended from their gods. Anything that was produced in Persia became the property of the kings, who would spend what came to them with almost unimaginable extravagance.

Many farmers left their lands and sought refuge in places of worship, fleeing either from exorbitant taxes or forced entry into the army. For the people of Persia were used as mere pawns in the wars that would intermittently be waged between the Persian Empire and the Byzantine Empire; and of course, the citizens had nothing to benefit from such wars; it was only the kings who stood to gain profit.

India

Before the advent of Islam, at around the beginning of the sixth century of the Christian calendar, India was immersed in ignorance. Obscene acts, which were considered holy by India's inhabitants, were perpetrated in houses of worship. Women were considered to be of no value. That many women would burn themselves to death upon the death of their husbands clearly indicated their standing in society. And if a woman did live on after her husband's death, it was forbidden for her to remarry. India was isolated from the world, which of course led to widespread ignorance. Its inhabitants forced upon themselves absurdly strict dietary rules. And those who were considered outcasts in society were forced to live outside the boundaries of the city.

Supported by political and religious law, the caste system made a clear distinction between the various classes of society. At the top of the hierarchy were the Brahmans – priests and scholars; then the Kshatriyas – warriors and rulers; the Vaisyas – merchants, traders, and farmers; and lastly the Sudras – artisans, laborers, servants, and slaves. The law gave the Brahmans the right to act with impunity; as for the Sudras, they didn't have the right to own property, to sit alongside Brahmans, or to read religious books. There was another caste whose members were ranked beneath the Sudras; they were called the 'untouchables,' and they were forced to do hard, menial, and highly unpleasant labor.

A Synopsis Of The Dominant Religions Of The World Prior To The Advent Of Islam

Before the advent of Islam, human beings were living through one of the worst periods of human history. The line of Prophets from the descendants of Ishaq ﷺ had come to an end with the ascension of Jesus ﷺ to the heavens. In the centuries that followed, belief in the trinity gained more and more acceptance among Christians, until, around the beginning of the sixth century, only a handful of people still believed in the Islamically Monotheistic teachings of Jesus ﷺ.

The entire world was engulfed in darkness. Describing the period prior to his Prophethood, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Verily, Allah looked at the inhabitants of the world and despised them, both the Arabs and foreigners among them, except for some remnants from the People of the Book (i.e., those among them who still believed in pure Islamic Monotheism)." Polytheism and idol worship had become widespread. Some people apostatized from their religion; others didn't follow any religion at all, other than ritualistic acts of worship they performed to idols; and others believed in a distorted form of a divinely revealed religion. In short, almost all of the inhabitants of earth were living in a state of darkness and ignorance.

As for the Jews, their religion had become a soulless set of rituals; and they had become greatly influenced by neighbouring nations or by nations that had subjugated them. And so the Jews took from them many of their polytheistic beliefs and practices. As one Jewish scholar put it, "That the Prophets were constantly furious about idol worship proves that the concepts of idol worship and polytheism had crept their way into the souls of the Children of Israel. They were a people who entertained superstitious and polytheistic beliefs. And the Talmud attests to the fact that the Jews were strongly attracted to the idea of idol worship." Judaism had reached its nadir just prior to the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ. The revealed scriptures that Jews had with them had become greatly distorted and, as a result, contained many false notions about Allah ﷻ.

As for Christianity, distortions and false interpretations corrupted its pristine teachings, so that it no longer remained a religion of pure Monotheism. Many polytheistic practices, with the concept of trinity of course at the forefront, became established Christian doctrine. Jesus ﷺ came to invite people to the worship of Allah ﷻ alone, but polytheism was deeply ingrained in the souls of the people to whom he ﷺ was sent, so that soon after his time various polytheistic beliefs were being disseminated, all in the name of Christianity. If a Christian man was martyred, others attributed divine qualities to him and built little statue of him. People began to worship saints and martyrs. Holding a status not very different from the idols of the Quraish, saints were considered to be intermediaries between Christians and God. It was in the fourth century that the trinity became the official doctrine of the church; but it is only recently – in the latter half of the nineteenth century – that the process through which trinity became doctrine was made public.

Magianism was also widespread at the beginning of the sixth century. Magians were known to have worshipped the elements – mainly fire. Houses of fire worship had been built in various places. Inside those houses, people would pray and follow a strict

set of guidelines and etiquettes; outside, they were free to do as they pleased, so that, in essence, there was no real difference between Magians and people who did not adhere to any religion. The duties of Magian priests involved worshipping the sun four times a day; they also worshipped the moon, fire, and water. As priests, they followed a strict code of hygiene; it was their task to make sure that the fires in houses of worship never became extinguished and never came in contact with water.

The Magians of Iran turned towards fire when they prayed. And the last of their kings, Yazdgard, once swore by the sun and said, "I swear by the sun, which is the greatest god." Although Magianism is clouded by a great deal of mystery, it seems that one unifying belief among Magians of all centuries is belief in two gods, one being the god of light or goodness, and the other being the god of darkness or evil.

Buddhism was practiced in India and middle Asia. Adherents of Buddhism carried idols wherever they went, and they were known for having built many temples. Anywhere that Buddha traveled, statues were erected in his honour. The original religion of India was Brahmanism, which was an ancient form of Hinduism. Without a doubt, both Hinduism and Buddhism were, and are, polytheistic religions.

Around the time when the Prophet ﷺ was about to be sent to mankind as a warner and bearer of glad tidings, the people of the world were drowning in the mires of polytheism. It was as if members of each religion – Christians, Jews, Buddhists, and Brahmans – were competing with one another to see who could best glorify false deities.

The Prophet ﷺ alluded to that widespread state of ignorance during one of his sermons:

"Lo, verily, my Lord commanded me to teach you what you are ignorant of, from that which He has taught me on this day of mine: 'All of the wealth that I have bestowed upon a slave (of Mine) is lawful. And I have indeed created My slaves *Hunafaa*

(i.e., as Muslims, as people who are inherently inclined towards *Tawheed* and away from polytheism). Devils indeed came to them; have taken them away from their religion, and have made forbidden upon them that which I have made lawful for them; and have ordered them to associate as partner to Me that with which I have not sent down any authority.' And indeed, Allah looked at the inhabitants of earth and despised them, both the Arabs and foreigners among them, except for some remnants from the People of the Book (i.e., those who still believed in Islamic Monotheism)."[1]

[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Paradise," chapter, "The Qualities by which the People of Paradise and the People of the Hellfire are Distinguished in this World." *Hadeeth* Number: 2865.

2

The Early Arabs And Their Civilizations

The Early Arabs

Based on the different descendants of today's Arabs, historians have classified early Arabs into three categories:

1) The *Al-Baaidah* Arabs

They are from the tribes of 'Aad, Thamood, Al-'Amaaliqah, Tasm, Jadees, Umaim, Jurhum, Hadramoot, and those that are closely linked with them. Prior to the advent of Islam, the *Al-Baaidah* Arabs were wiped off of the face of the earth, leaving no descendants behind. But while they did roam the earth, they had kings whose dominions extended to Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions) and Egypt.

2) The *Al-'Aaribah* Arabs

These are the Arabs who are descended from the line of Ya'rob ibn Yashjub ibn Qahtaan; they are called the *Al-Qahtaaniyyah* Arabs, and they are also known as the Southern Arabs. The kings of Yemen were *Al-'Aaribah* Arabs, as were the people from the kingdoms of Ma'een, Saba, and Himyar.

3) The *'Adnaaniyyah* Arabs

They are called the *'Adnaaniyyah* because they are descended from

'Adnaan, who in turn was descended from the line of Ismaa'eel ibn Ibraaheem ﷺ. They are known as the Arabized Arabs, which alludes to the fact that non-Arab blood entered into their lineage. When that first happened, Arabic became the language of the new racial mix.

The *'Adnaaniyyah* Arabs are the Arabs of the north. Their original homeland was Makkah, and they are descended from Ismaa'eel ﷺ, his children, and the Jurhum tribe, for after Ibraaheem ﷺ left Haajar ﷺ and Ismaa'eel ﷺ in Makkah, Isma'eel ﷺ was raised among the Jurhum, learned Arabic from them, and married one of their women. Thus his children were raised as Arabs.

The most noteworthy of Ismaa'eel's early descendants was 'Adnaan, who was a direct forebear of the Prophet ﷺ. It is to 'Adnaan that the major Arab tribes and subtribes ascribe themselves. After 'Adnaan came his son Ma'ad, and then Nizaar, and then his two children, Mudar and Rabe'e'ah.

As for Rabe'e'ah, the son of Nizaar, his descendants settled in the east: 'Abdul-Qais settled in Bahrain; Haneefah, in Yamaamah; the children of Bakr ibn Waail, somewhere between Bahrain and Yamaamah; Tameem, in the Baadiyah of Basrah; and Taghlab, in the land of the (Arabian) Peninsula, between the Dijlah and the Euphrates, after having first crossed the latter river.

And as for the descendants of Mudar, Saleem settled near Al-Madeenah; Thaqeef, in Taaif; the rest of the Hawaazin, east of Makkah; (the children of) Asad, from Eastern Taimaa until Western Kufah; (the children of) Dhubyaan and 'Abs, from Taimaa until Hawaraan. Most genealogists and other scholars classify Arabs into two categories: *Qahtaaniyyah* and *'Adnaaniyyah*; however, there are some scholars who maintain that all Arabs are *'Adnaaniyyah*, for the *Qahtaaniyyah*, they say, are also from the descendants of Ismaa'eel ﷺ. Al-Bukhaaree titled a chapter of his *Saheeh* based on this latter opinion: "Chapter: The Relation Of (The People Of) Yemen (i.e., the *Qahtaaniyyah*) To Ismaa'eel ﷺ." In that chapter, he related a

Hadeeth from Salamah ؓ, who said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to a people who, at the time, were competing against one another in archery. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Fire (your arrows), O children of Ismaa'eel; and I am with the children of – such and such person.' One of the two groups restrained their hands (i.e., they didn't fire any arrows). The Prophet ﷺ said, 'What is the matter with you?' They said, 'How can we fire, when you are with the children of – such and such person.' The Prophet ﷺ said, "Fire (your arrows), for I am with you all.""^[1] And according to some of the narrations of this *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Fire (your arrows), O children of Ismaa'eel, for your father was an archer."

Bukhaaree said, "Aslam ibn Afsaa ibn Haarithah ibn 'Amr ibn 'Aamir was from the Khuzaa'ah." What this means is that the Khuzaa'ah is one of the groups who was separated from the tribes of Saba when Allah ﷻ sent upon them the flood of Al-'Arim.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is from the descendants of Mudar. Bukhaaree related that Kaleeb ibn Waail once asked Zainab bint Abu Salamah ؓ, "Do you think that the Prophet ﷺ was from (the descendants of) Mudar?" She answered, "Who was he from if not from Mudar (i.e., he ﷺ was definitely descended from Mudar)? (He was) from the children of An-Nadr ibn Kinaanah."^[2]

The Quraish were the descendants of Kinaanah, through one of his great-grandsons, Failhr ibn (son of) Maalik ibn An-Nadr ibn Kinaanah. The Quraish tribe was divided into various subtribes, the most famous of them being as follows: Jumh, Sahm, 'Adee (so for example, the members of this sub-tribe were called Banu 'Adee, the children of 'Adee), Makhzoom, Taim, and Zuhrah; and more importantly, there were the subtribes of Qusai ibn Kilaab: 'Abdud-Daar ibn Qusai, Asad ibn 'Abdul-'Uzzah ibn Qusai, and 'Abd-Manaaf ibn Qusai. 'Abd-Manaaf was then divided into four subgroups, which were respectively ascribed to 'Abd-Shams,

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Virtues"; chapter, "Yemen Being Ascribed to Ismaa'eel ؓ." *Hadeeth* number: 3507

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Virtues." *Hadeeth* number: 3491.

Naufal, Al-Muttalib, and Haashim. It was from the household of Al-Muttalib that Allah ﷻ chose our beloved Prophet, Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib ibn Haashim. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Indeed, Allah chose Kinaanah from the children of Ismaa’eel; He chose Quraish from Kinaanah; He chose the children of Haashim from Quraish; and He chose me from the children of Haashim.”^[1]

The Civilizations Of The Early Arabs

1) The civilization of Saba (Sheeba) in Yemen

It was in Yemen that the people of this civilization lived and prospered, benefiting greatly from the copious rainfall that Allah ﷻ blessed them with. Using great engineering skill, they built dams, the most famous of them being the Ma’rib dam. They used the water that was held up to irrigate their fields; they had gardens in which grew all kinds of trees, vegetation, and luscious fruits. But they were ungrateful to Allah ﷻ, Who then punished them with a great flood. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكِنِهِمْ آيَةٌ جَنَّتَانِ عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ كُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لَمْ بَلَدَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ وَرَبُّ غَفُورٌ ۝۱۵ فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتِ أَكْطٍ خَمَطٍ وَائِلٍ وَشَوْءٍ مِّن سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ ۝۱۶ ذَلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُم بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَهَلْ يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا الْكَفُورُ ۝﴾

“Indeed there was for Saba’ (Sheba) a sign in their dwelling-place, – two gardens on the right hand and on the left (and it was said to them) “Eat of the provision of your Lord, and be grateful to Him, a fair land and an Oft-Forgiving Lord. But they turned away (from the obedience of Allah), so We sent against them Sail Al-‘Arim (flood released from the dam), and We converted their two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit, and

^[1] Saheeh Muslim, “The Book of Virtues”; chapter, “The Superiority of the Prophet’s Lineage.” Hadeeth number: 2276.

tamarisks, and some few lote trees. Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers. And never do We requite in such a way except those who are ungrateful, (disbelievers)." (Qur'an 34: 15-17)

It is indicated in the Qur'an that, in past times, there were a series of inhabited cities or villages that extended from Yemen to the lands of Al-Hijaaz (Makkah, Al-Madeenah, Taa'if, etc.), and then continued further northwards to the lands of Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions). Consequently, trading caravans that traveled from Yemen to the lands of Ash-Sham always had plentiful supplies of shade, water, and food along the way. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ الْقُرَى الَّتِي بَرَكْنَا فِيهَا قُرًى ظَاهِرَةً وَقَدَرْنَا فِيهَا السَّيْرَ سِيرُوا فِيهَا لَيَالِيَ وَأَيَّامًا ءَامِنِينَ ۝١٨ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا بَعِدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ وَمَزَقْنَاهُمْ كُلَّ مُمَرِّقٍ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ۝١٩﴾

"And We placed between them and the towns which We had blessed, towns easy to be seen, and We made the stages (of journey) between them easy (saying): "Travel in them safely both by night and day." But they said: "Our Lord! Make the stages between our journey longer," and they wronged themselves, so We made them as tales (in the land), and We dispersed them all, totally. Verily, in this are indeed signs for every steadfast grateful (person)." (Qur'an 34: 18, 19)

2) The civilization of 'Ad

The people of 'Ad lived in the northern part of Hadramoont. They lived in lofty buildings, were skilled in various trades, and were blessed with springs, fields, and gardens. And it was to them that Allah ﷻ sent Prophet Hood عليه السلام. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كَذَّبَتْ عَادُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ۝١٢٣ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ أَلَا نُنْفِوَنَ ۝١٢٤ إِنِّي لَكُم رَسُولٌ ءَمِينٌ ۝١٢٥﴾

﴿١٢٥﴾ فَأَنْفِقُوا لِلَّهِ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٢٦﴾ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجَرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ أَتَنْتَوْنَ يَكُلَّ رَيْعَ آيَةٍ تَقْبُثُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَتَسْخَرُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُمْ بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ فَأَنْفِقُوا لِلَّهِ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٣١﴾ وَأَنْفِقُوا الَّذِي أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَامٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ وَجَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٣٤﴾ ﴿١٣٤﴾

“Ad (people) denied the Messengers. When their brother Hood said to them: “Will you not fear Allah and obey Him? Verily! I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allah, keep your duty to Him, and obey me. No reward do I ask of you for it (my Message of Islamic Monotheism), my reward is only from the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). Do you build high palaces on every high place, while you do not live in them? And do you get for yourselves palaces (fine buildings) as if you will live therein forever.? And when you seize, seize you as tyrants? So fear Allah, keep your duty to Him, and obey me. And keep your duty to Him, fear Him Who has aided you with all (good things) that you know. He has aided you with cattle and children. And gardens and springs.” (Qur’an 26: 123-134)

3) The Civilization of Thamood

The Qur’an referred to the people of Thamood, who lived in the lands of Al-Hijr and were endowed with the ability to carve houses for themselves high up on mountains. Like the people of ‘Ad, the people of Thamood were blessed with many springs, fields, and copious gardens. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ صَالِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٤٢﴾ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾ فَأَنْفِقُوا لِلَّهِ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٤٤﴾ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجَرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾ أَتَنْتَرِكُونَ فِي مَا هَئِنَّا ءَامِنِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٤٧﴾ وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾ وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرِهِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾ فَأَنْفِقُوا لِلَّهِ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٥٠﴾﴾

"Thamood (people) denied the Messengers. When their brother Saalih (Saaleh) said to them : 'Will you not fear Allah and obey Him? I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allah, keep your duty to Him, and obey me. No reward do I ask of you for it (my Message of Islamic Monotheism), my reward is only from the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). Will you be left secure in that which you have here? In gardens and springs. And green crops (fields, etc.) and date palms with soft spadix. And you carve houses out of mountains with great skill. So fear Allah, keep your duty to Him, and obey me.'" (Qur'an 26: 141-150)

And He ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَادٍ وَبَوَّأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
تَتَخِفُّونَ مِنْ سُهُولِهَا قُصُورًا وَتَنْحِتُونَ الْجِبَالَ بُيُوتًا فَاذْكُرُوا آيَاتِ
اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ﴾ (٧٤)

"And remember when He made you successors after 'Ad (people) and gave you habitations in the land, you build for yourselves palaces in plains, and carve out homes in the mountains. So remember the graces (bestowed upon you) from Allah, and do not go about making mischief on the earth.'" (Qur'an 7: 74)

The peoples of 'Ad and Thamood were destroyed long ago. Only mounds and rubble and vestiges of their structures remain. Their trees dwindled away, and their springs dried up. What were once beautiful gardens and fields exist no more; all that remains now is barren land.

3

Politics, Religion, Economics, And The Overall Condition Of Arabs Prior To Islam

Religion

Overall, the world status of Arabs prior to Islam was nothing to boast about; at best, they deserved a mention only in the footnotes section of a historical study of the era. The political and legal structure of Arab societies was in chaos; the belief system was absurd. At the best of times, they were no better than underlings of either the Persian or Roman Empire.

Arabs glorified and blindly followed the religion of their fathers and grandfathers, no matter how misguided and superstitious their beliefs were. And so they faithfully worshipped idols. Every tribe had its own idol: Hudhail ibn Mudrikah worshipped Suwaa'; the tribe of Kalb worshipped Wadd; Mudhaj worshipped Yahghooth; Khayawaan worshipped Ya'ooq; and Himyar worshipped Nasr. Both the Khuzaa'ah and Quraish tribes worshipped Isaaf and Naailah. The idol Manaaf was situated on the seashore, and was glorified by all Arabs in general, and by the Aus and Khazraj tribes in particular. The idol Al-Laaf was in Thaqeef, and Al-'Uzzaa was situated above Dhaaf 'Ariq; these latter two idols were considered by the Quraish to be the greatest of idols.

Other than these main idols, Arabs worshipped a countless number of lesser idols – idols that individuals could take along on journeys

and that were small enough to be carried around or placed in homes. In his *Saheeh Bukhaaree* related that Abu Rajaa Al-Utaaridee said, "We used to worship a stone. If we found a better stone, we would shoot the first one away and take the second one (as an idol). And if we could find no stone, we would gather a mound of earth; then we would bring a sheep and milk it over (the mound). And then we would walk around it (as an act of worship)."^[1]

Such polytheistic practices prevented Arabs from knowing Allah ﷻ, glorifying Him, and having faith in Him ﷻ. They claimed that the idols were only intermediaries between them and Allah ﷻ, but that was of course an unacceptable excuse, if they even meant it is an excuse. Their idols and the practice of idol worship controlled their hearts, deeds, and all aspects of their lives, thus leaving little room in their hearts for the glorification of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ وَالْمَوْتَى يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴾ (36)

"It is only those who listen (to the Message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ), will respond (benefit from it), but as for the dead (disbelievers), Allah will raise them up, then to Him they will be returned (for their recompense)." (Qur'an 6: 36)

Only remnants of the religion of Ibraaheem ؑ – which had reigned supreme in the early days of Makkah – remained, and even those remnants were subject to distortion. True, Arabs performed pilgrimage to Makkah; but they came to worship idols, and the pilgrimage season was a time not of piety, but of mutual boasting over worldly glories. As for the purely Monotheistic beliefs of Ibraaheem ؑ, Arabs added superstition and falsehood to them, thus making it very hard to see in the new beliefs the original teachings of Islamic Monotheism. And as such, Arabs had cut off all religious ties to Ibraaheem ؑ; in fact, they were closest in their beliefs and practices not to the People of the Book, but to the polytheistic Brahmans and Buddhists of India.

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Battles"; chapter, "The Delegates of Banu Haneefah, and the Hadeeth of Thumaamah ibn Uthaal." *Hadeeth* number: 4376.

Despite widespread ignorance and polytheism, there were some individuals, albeit very few in number, who refused to worship idols, and instead worshipped Allah ﷻ alone. They are now known as the *Hunafaa*, which is the plural of the word *Haneef*, a person who is a pure Islamic Monotheist. They are called *Hunafaa* because they were following the religion of Ibraaheem ؑ, whom Allah ﷻ referred to in the Qur'an as being *Haneef*. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾ (TV)

"Ibraaheem (Abraham) was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifaa (Islamic Monotheism – to worship none but Allah Alone) and he was not of the Al-Mushrikun."
(Qur'an 3: 67)

One such *Haneef* was Zaid ibn 'Amr ibn Nufail – may Allah have mercy on him – who refused to worship idols and to eat Islamically unlawful food, such as blood, an animal that is slaughtered by other than Allah's Name, or an animal that is not slaughtered but dies of natural causes.

Another example of a *Haneef* – a pure Monotheist who followed the religion of Ibraaheem ؑ and Ismaa'eel ؑ – was Qiss ibn Saa'idah Al-Iyaadee. Qiss worshipped Allah alone, without associating any partner with Him in worship; and he was known for his intelligence, wisdom, insight, and noble character. He believed in resurrection after death, and would, prior to the advent of Islam, give glad tidings about the coming of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. In *Dalaail An-Nubuwwah*, Abu Nu'a'im related that Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said, "Verily, Qiss ibn Saa'idah would preach to his people in the marketplace ('Ukaadh); he said in one of his sermons, 'The truth shall become known from this direction,' and he pointed with his hands towards Makkah. They (i.e., the people gathered around him) said, 'And what is this truth (or who is the bearer of this truth)?' He said, 'A man from

the children of Luai ibn Ghaalib will invite you to the Word of Sincerity (the phrase of *Tawheed*), to the eternal life, and to bliss and happiness that never ends. So when he invites you, answer him (by accepting his message). Were I to know that I will live until the time he is sent, I (would consequently know that I) will be the first who will hasten to him (in order to become a follower).''' Qiss did end up being a contemporary of the Prophet ﷺ, but he died before the Prophet ﷺ received revelation for the first time.

Some Arabs became Christians; others became Jews; but neither Christianity nor Judaism had a substantial number of followers in the Arabian Peninsula. For that matter, even planet worship and Magianism caught on to a very limited degree among Arabs. Despite the presence of minority religious groups in the Arabian Peninsula, the vast majority of Arabs were – until the advent of Islam – die-hard idol worshippers.

The Political Situation Of The Arabian Peninsula

The inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula were of two kinds: the nomadic desert dweller (Bedouin) and the city dweller. Tribal laws and customs prevailed all over Arabia, even among the more civilized kingdoms of that region, such as the kingdom of Yemen in the south, the kingdom of Al-Heerah in the northeast, and the kingdom of Al-Ghasaasinah in the northwest.

A tribe was a group of people who were linked to one another through blood relation. It was the laws and customs of each tribe that dictated the relation between the individual and the group as well as the rights that were due to and obligatory upon – depending on the case – each member of the tribe. For example, the chief of a tribe had many rights over his people, but they too had rights over him. There were a number of factors that made a tribe member suitable for the position of chief – his status, generosity, character, bravery, and so on. The chief of a given tribe had the right to be honoured and obeyed by his people; if there was a dispute, his judgment was final. He had monetary rights as

well: one-quarter of the spoils of war belonged to him; before the distribution of the spoils of war, he had the right to choose specific items for himself; whatever was taken from an enemy before battle belonged to him; whatever form of wealth (from the spoils of war) could not be distributed, belonged to him. These rights did not come without a price; the chief had many duties that he had to fulfill, some of which effectively nullified the benefits of the aforementioned monetary rights. During times of peace, he was expected to be very generous to his fellow tribesmen. And in war, he was expected to fight in the frontlines; also, it was his duty and right to enact peace agreements when doing so was for the benefit of the tribe.

Living under tribal laws and customs, the average tribesman lived a life of freedom, having to answer to no one, as long as he harmed no one. And as such, it became a part of the nature of Arabs to love freedom, and to hate injustice and subservience. Every individual member of a given tribe fought for all of the other members; more honour for the tribe meant more honour for the individual tribesman. On the downside of this arrangement, one automatically supported his fellow tribesmen, regardless of whether they were in the right or in the wrong. Thus in some regards, the individual tribesman was considered more as a member of the tribe than as an individual.

Each individual tribe had its own status and political reality, and depending on its situation, it waged war against or formed alliances with other tribes. War was a constant reality among Arabs; among the most famous of wars in their history was the War of Fijaar. But other than major wars, minor skirmishes or attacks were commonplace. A member of one tribe might attack a member of another tribe for personal motives, such as revenge; or one tribe might attack another tribe for profit; the livelihood of some tribes actually depended upon the practice of attacking other tribes and taking all of their possessions by force. After such ruthless attacks took place, homes and entire villages were left empty, as if no one had lived there the day before.

The Economic Situation Of The Arabian Peninsula

Since most of the Arabian Peninsula consists of vast desert land, its inhabitants did not work in agriculture, except in the extreme borders of the Peninsula – particularly in Yemen, to the south, and Syria, to the north – and in the odd scattered oases found in central Arabia. Without much vegetation in Arabia, it was sheep and camels that made for the livelihood of both desert and city dwellers. Tribes would go from place to place with their herds, looking for pastureland.

As for industry and manufacturing, Arabs were far, far behind other nations; they practically refused to work in those fields, instead allowing foreigners and slaves to do their work for them. Even when they wanted to rebuild the Ka'bah, they sought the help of an Egyptian, who had survived the sinking of his sea vessel in Jeddah, and who then settled in Makkah.

It is true that, without farming and manufacturing, Arabs were, compared to other peoples, at an economic disadvantage; but they did compensate in another regard: They were an advanced trading nation, by dint of their strategically sound location between Africa and eastern Asia.

It was primarily the city dwellers of the Arabian Peninsula who engaged in trade, and most successful among them were the people of the Quraish. The Quraish differed from other tribes in that they were the inhabitants of Makkah, which was considered to be holy by all Arabs; as such, they were able to travel in safety all over Arabia, for no tribe dared to attack the dwellers of the inviolable city of Makkah. Other tribes did not fare as well; their trading caravans were constantly being subjected to highway robbery by individuals and others tribes that made a living through attacking and robbing passing caravans. Allah ﷻ reminded the Quraish of this particular blessing in the Noble Qur'an:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا وَيَخْطَفُ النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ أَفِيَا بَطِلٍ
يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ يَكْفُرُونَ﴾ (٦٧)

“Have they not seen that We have made (Makkah) a sanctuary secure, and that men are being snatched away from all around them? Then do they believe in Batil (falsehood – polytheism, idols, and all deities other than Allah), and deny (become ingrate for) the Graces of Allah?” (Qur’an 29: 67)

The Quraish dispatched two very large trading caravans on a yearly basis; one went in the winter to Yemen, and the other went in the summer to Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions). They went in safety, while other tribes were constantly being attacked and robbed. Throughout every year, the Quraish sent many lesser caravans to the various marketplaces of Arabia (and perhaps even elsewhere). Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَا يَلْفُ قَرْنِشٌ ۝١ إِلَيْهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الْشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ ۝٢ فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ ۝٣ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ ۝٤﴾

“(It is a great Grace and Protection from Allah), for the taming of the Quraish, (and with all those Allah’s Grace and Protections for their taming, We cause) the (Quraish) caravans to set forth safe in winter (to the south), and in summer (to the north without any fear), So let them worship (Allah) the Lord of this House (the Ka’bah in Makkah). (Ĥe) Who has fed them against hunger, and has made them safe from fear.” (Qur’an 106: 1-4)

The caravans carried all kinds of merchandise that was available in the Arabian Peninsula – such as perfume, incense, spices, dates, ivory, beads, skins, silk garments, and weapons. Some merchandise was produced in the Peninsula, but some was imported from abroad. The trading caravans would carry such items to Ash-Sham and elsewhere, and would then return with full loads of wheat, grains, raisins, oils, and clothing.

The Yemenis were also known for trading, for their economic activities were conducted on land and by sea; they traveled to the shores of Africa, India, Indonesia, Sumatra, and the islands of the Arabian Peninsula. Once the inhabitants of Yemen became Muslims, they used their previous travel experience and

knowledge to help spread Islam to the above-mentioned lands.

Prior to the advent of Islam, usury was practiced on a widespread scale, perhaps having come to the Arabs from the Jews. In some cases, interest rates reached as high as one-hundred percent.

'Ukaadh, Majinnah, and Dhul-Majaaz were the names of the most famous marketplaces of the Arabian Peninsula. Some historians relate that Arabs would congregate at 'Ukaadh at the beginning of Dhil-Qai'dah; after twenty days passed, they would go to Majinnah. And when they saw the birth of the new moon for Dhil-Hijjah, they would go to Dhul-Majaaz, where they would stay for 8 days. Then they would go to 'Arafah for the pilgrimage. And neither in 'Arafah nor during the days of Minah did they conduct any business – not until the advent of Islam, for Allah ﷻ permitted them to do business during those days:

﴿لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَإِذَا أَفَضْتُمْ مِنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَيْتُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ﴾ (١٩٨)

"There is no sin on you if you seek the Bounty of your Lord (during pilgrimage by trading, etc.). Then when you leave 'Arafat, remember Allah (by glorifying His Praises, i.e., prayers and invocations, etc.) at the Mash'ar-il-Haraam. And remember Him (by invoking Allah for all good, etc.) as He has guided you, and verily, you were, before, of those who were astray." (Qur'an 2: 198)

These centers of trade remained open during the early days of Islam, but eventually closed down. During their heyday, 'Ukaadh, Majinnah, and Dhul-Majaaz were not merely marketplaces; they were also centers of poetry and public speaking. Great poets and speakers gathered and competed against one another in their respective arts; thus they were centers that greatly served the advancement of poetry and the Arabic language.

Arab Society

Like most primitive cultures, customs and traditions passed down through the generations dictated the social norms of Arabs, the social status of individual tribesman, the relations between fellow tribesmen, and the relations between one tribe and another. The following are some of the basic realities of Arab society prior to the advent of Islam:

1) There was no limit to the degree to which the nobility felt proud about their ancestry and ranking in society

Arabs were obsessed with the idea of preserving their pure blood, and so they would not intermarry with other races. Islam brought an end to that, making it clear to Arabs that the only factors that make one person superior to the next are piety and good deeds.

2) Arabs were also obsessed with eloquent speech and purity of language

Perhaps the reason why poetry had a strong hold on the hearts and minds of Arabs is that it was the most beautiful way of expressing and recording for posterity – when a poem was especially good – facts about their noble lineages. It is not surprising, therefore, that Arab societies produced so many wonderful poets and public speakers. A single line of poetry had the potential of raising or lowering the status of a tribe. So just as a modern day country becomes thrilled when its favourite sporting team performs at a world-class level, an Arab tribe would become overjoyed if one of its members became a skilled poet.

3) Women were treated like merchandise

At least among most tribes, women were on an equal par with merchandise, in a very literal sense, for they were passed down through inheritance. If a man died, his wife was passed down to his eldest son – provided, of course, that she was not his actual mother. He then had the right to marry her, or even to prevent her

from remarrying. This practice continued until Islam expressly forbade a man from marrying the wife of his father. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ۝٢٢﴾

“And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; indeed it was shameful and most hateful, and an evil way.” (Qur’an 4: 22)

Despite their deviant sexual practices, Arabs did forbid at least some forms of incestuous marriage, such as marriage with one’s mother, daughter, grandmother, sister, and aunt.

Women were oppressed in other ways as well; for example, women – as well as children – were not allowed to inherit wealth, for the entire estate of the deceased went only to those who could fight and help protect the tribe. It was not a written law that women couldn’t inherit wealth, but it was a practice recognized through established custom, and custom often had more force than legislated law. In this regard, the situation of women changed with the advent of Islam, with the death of Aus ibn Thaabit ؓ. Aus ؓ left behind two unsightly daughters and one very young son. His two nephews came and seized his entire estate, which they would have had the right to do (according to pre-Islamic customs) had they done so during the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. Aus’s wife pleaded with them, suggesting that they marry Aus’s two daughters, who could have then benefited at least in some way from their father’s wealth. But the two nephews refused, primarily because of the unsightliness of the two daughters. Aus’s wife then went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, “O Messenger of Allah, Aus has died, and has left behind a young son and two daughters. His two nephews, Suwaid and ‘Arfatah, came and seized his entire estate. I said to them, ‘Marry his two daughters,’ but they refused.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded the two nephews, saying, “Do not move (or spend or use) anything at all from the

estate.”^[1] And the following Verse was then revealed:

﴿لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ۝٧﴾

“There is a share for men and a share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest related, whether, the property be small or large – a legal share.” (Qur’an 4: 7)

Worse than the ill-treatment adult women received was what some Arabs did to their daughters. In the mind of the average Arab, a daughter was of no use and posed many potential problems. A daughter couldn’t fight and defend her clan and tribe; she couldn’t earn nearly as much money as men could; and if she was taken captive during war, her captors took her as a slave and used her to satisfy their sexual desires. Some females were even forced to work as prostitutes; like pimps do today, their masters would take from them all of the money they made. Society actually sanctioned such practices. Fearing shame and the above-mentioned eventualities, a man would become very sad and upset if his wife gave birth to a daughter. Describing this reality, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ۝٨ يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِن سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِوَيْهِ أَيْمِسُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُمُ فِي التُّرَابِ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ۝٩﴾

“And when the news of (the birth of) a female (child) is brought to any of them, his face becomes dark, and he is filled with inward grief! He hides himself from the people because of the evil of that whereof he has been informed. Shall he keep her with dishonour or bury her in the earth? Certainly, evil is their decision.” (Qur’an 16: 58, 59)

Many fathers would choose to bury their shame, by literally burying their daughters alive. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ ۝٨ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ ۝٩﴾

^[1] Tafseer Al-Qurtubee (5/45).

"And when the female (infant) buried alive (as the pagan Arabs used to do) shall be questioned. For what sin she was killed?"
(Qur'an 81: 8, 9)

Some parents buried their child alive because they were poor and feared that they didn't have enough wealth to raise a child; others did so not because they were poor, but because they feared becoming poor in the future. Islam of course forbade all of these evil practices. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَنِ اتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا
وَيَالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ
وَأَيَّاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنٌ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا
النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَُمْ وَصَّكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited you from : Join not anything in worship with Him; be good and dutiful to your parents; kill not your children because of poverty – We provide sustenance for you and for them; come not near to Al-Fawahish (shameful sins, illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) whether committed openly or secretly, and kill not anyone whom Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islamic law). This He has commanded you that you may understand." (Qur'an 6: 151)

And Allah ﷻ also said:

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشِيَةَ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْئًا
كَبِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾﴾

"And kill not your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Surely, the killing of them is a great sin."
(Qur'an 17: 31)

To be sure, these practices were not uncommon; but there were some tribes that did not sanction infanticide. Even among the Quraish, there were individuals who despised the practice of

burying children alive. Zaid ibn 'Amr ibn Nufail – may Allah have mercy on him – was a noteworthy example; Zaid would even go to fathers who contemplated killing their daughters and offered to raise their daughters for them.

Some Arab tribes honoured women and even consulted with them about marriage. In some regards, women rose above their circumstances; they were brave and would accompany their husbands to the battlefield, and if need arose, would even participate in the fighting. The Bedouin woman would help her husband and take care of their livestock; she would also help out by spinning wool and knitting clothing.

4) Marriage took on many strange forms.

Marriage as we know it today was just one form of marriage recognized by Arabs; there were other forms as well, all agreed upon by custom. If an individual engaged in one of the accepted forms, no one else had the legal right to reproach him. I use the word legal, but the forms of marriage were not set down in writing in a constitution or charter of laws; rather, like most other laws that were collectively agreed upon by Arabs, custom alone dictated the actions of society's members.

'Aishah ؓ related to us four forms of marriage that were practiced by Arabs during the days of ignorance:

"Marriage, during the days of ignorance (pre-Islamic days), was upon four forms; one of those forms is the marriage that people engage in today, which involves a man going to another man and proposing to have his dependant (ward, charge) or daughter's hand in marriage; he would then give her dowry to her, and marry her. Another form of marriage involved a man saying to his wife just after she became purified from menstruation, "Send for such and such man, and ask him to have intercourse (so that he can get you pregnant)." The husband would stay away from her and categorically avoid touching her, until it became clear whether she got pregnant from the other man whom she asked to have sex with her. When the issue of her pregnancy became

clear (i.e., at the time of her next period), her husband would, if he so desired, have (sexual) relations with her. He would only do that (i.e., he would only have another man have sex with his wife) out of a desire to have a child of noble descent. This form of marriage is (called) the Marriage of *Istibdaa'*. In another form of marriage, a group of men, fewer than ten in number, would enter upon a woman, and each one of them would have her (i.e., would have sex with her). After she became pregnant, gave birth, and a number of nights passed after she gave birth, she would summon the men to come to her. None of the men could refuse, and so all of them would gather by her side. She would say to them, "You indeed know what you did, and I have given birth. And so he is your son, O so-and-so," and she would mention the name of the man whom she loved (to have as her child's father). Her child would be ascribed to that man, and he could not refuse (to be the father). As for the fourth form of marriage, many people would enter upon a woman (and engage in sexual intercourse with her), and she would not refuse anyone who came to her. They were the fallen women who would install banners over their doors; whoever wanted them, would enter upon them (and have sex with them). If one such woman became pregnant and then delivered a child, they (i.e., the men who had sex with her) would be gathered for her, and *Kaafahs* (people who were recognized for their expertise in being able to discern relatives through physical attributes) would be sent for them. Then, the *Kaafaahs* would ascribe the child to the one they thought (was the father); the child would then be ascribed to him, and would be called his son. And he wouldn't refuse [to accept him as his son (such were the rules of the game that everyone followed according to custom). Then when Muhammad ﷺ was sent with the truth, he destroyed the marriage of ignorance (i.e., the latter three of the four forms), and kept legislated the marriage that people engage in today."^[1]

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Marriage"; chapter, "Those Who Say: Without (the Involvement of) a Guardian (in the Marriage Agreement). There is no Marriage." *Hadeeth* number: 5127.

Some scholars mentioned forms of marriage that 'Aishah ؓ didn't mention; one was the taking of boyfriends and girlfriends, which was in fact fornication and not marriage. Allah ﷻ mentioned this practice in the following Verse:

﴿وَلَا تُنْكِحُوا الْأَوْلَادَ﴾

"Nor taking boyfriends." (Qur'an 4: 25)

Then there was the *Mut'ah* marriage, which remained lawful during the early days of Islam, but was eventually prohibited. *Mut'ah* marriage is a temporary marriage that ends after a predetermined period of time elapses - one month, two months, one year, whatever is agreed upon by the two contracting parties. Another form of marriage involved a trade: During the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, one man would say to another, "Give up your wife to me, and I will give up my wife to you, and I will give you more."^[1] And yet another form of false marriage was called *Nikaah Ash-Shigaar*: By way of formal agreement, one man would marry his daughter off to another man, on the condition that that man married his daughter off to him; and in this transaction, no dowry would be given to either of the two daughters.

During the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, Arabs considered it lawful for a man to be married to two sisters at the same time; they also deemed it lawful for a man to have as many wives as he wanted. Countless Arab men of course took advantage of the situation, so that some men had ten or more wives. With the advent of Islam, any man who embraced Islam had to divorce any additional wife so that he was left with four wives; and even the remaining four he kept only if he knew that he was able to spend on them and treat them with justice. If he feared that he wouldn't be able to do justice between two wives or more, he would remain content with one wife. Prior to Islam, men would certainly not treat their wives with justice; rather the opposite took place: they would treat

^[1] *Fathul-Baaree* (9/150).

them harshly and usurp all of their rights. Islam then came and did justice to women; they gained rights that they never could have previously dreamt of, and their husbands were instructed to treat them well and with kindness.

5) A man was always allowed to take back his wife, no matter how many times he had previously divorced her

The concept of divorce was recognized among Arabs, but men were given an unlimited amount of freedom in terms of being able to take back their wives after first divorcing them. A man could divorce his wife and then take her back; he could divorce her again and then take her back again; and he could continue this process endlessly, always having the right to take back his wife. In the early days of Islam, this practice was sanctioned, but then was finally limited in scope with the revelation of the following Verse:

﴿الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانٍ فَإِمْسَاكُكِ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيعُ بِإِحْسَنٍ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا بِمَا ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٢٩﴾﴾

"The divorce is twice, after that, either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness. And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of your Mahr (bridal-money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) which you have given them, except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah (e.g., to deal with each other on a fair basis). Then if you fear that they would not be able to keep the limits ordained by Allah, then there is no sin on either of them if she gives back (the Mahr or a part of it) for her Al-Kuhl' (divorce). These are the limits ordained by Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits ordained by Allah, then such are the Zaalimoon (wrong-doers, etc.)." (Qur'an 2: 229)

Still giving a man the opportunity to make amends with his wife after divorce and to take back a hastily spoken word (i.e., "I divorce you"), Islam limited the number of times a man could divorce his wife and yet still take her back.

In Islam, after a man divorces his wife for the first time, he has a period during which he can take her back. If he does take her back and then divorces her for a second time, he has another period during which he can take her back. But if he takes her back for a second time and then divorces her for a third time, the divorce is final, and he may not take her back. The only way he can get back together with her is if she marries another man and then divorces him; and even still, he may not orchestrate a false marriage between her and another man in order to get her back. Her marrying another man and then divorcing him must occur naturally, without advanced planning. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

"And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she has married another husband. Then, if the other husband divorces her, it is no sin on both of them that they reunite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah. These are the Limits of Allah, which He makes plain for the people who have knowledge." (Qur'an 2: 230)

In regard to divorce, Islam also forbade a practice known as *Zihaar*, which involves a man saying to his wife, "You are like the back of my mother (which means that, as with one's mother, one will certainly not have sex with his wife, so it is a kind of vow)." Describing *Zihaar* as "an ill word and a lie," Allah ﷻ gives a man who says the words of *Zihaar* a way out of his predicament through the legislation of atonement. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْكُم مِّن نِّسَائِهِمْ مَا هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ إِنْ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ

إِلَّا الَّتِي وَلَدْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢﴾

“Those among you who make their wives unlawful (Az-Zihaar) to them by saying to them “You are like my mother’s back.” They cannot be their mothers. None can be their mothers except those who gave them birth. And verily, they utter an ill word and a lie. And verily, Allah is Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving. And those who make unlawful to them (their wives) (by Az-Zihaar) and wish to free themselves from what they uttered, (the penalty) in that case (is) the freeing of a slave before they touch each other. That is an admonition to you (so that you may not return to such an ill thing). And Allah is All-Aware of what you do. And he who finds not (the money for freeing a slave) must fast two successive months before they both touch each other. And for him who is unable to do so, he should feed sixty of the Miskin (poor). That is in order that you may have perfect faith in Allah and His Messenger. These are the limits set by Allah. And for disbelievers, there is a painful torment.”
(Qur’an 58: 2-4)

6) War was a constant reality

Arabs didn’t need an important reason to go to war and to shed blood; to the contrary, they would start wars for the most trifling of reasons. It didn’t matter that the tribal ways that they were fighting to uphold were senseless and trivial; they would fight nonetheless. In pre-Islamic times, Arabs were warlike people, which they became probably through environment and upbringing.

Consider two examples that illustrate the warlike nature of pre-Islamic Arabs and the way in which they started wars for insignificant reasons. In the first example, the Taghlib and Bakr tribes waged a bitter and long war against each other. How did the war start? A man named Jarmee from the Bakr tribe owned a she-camel; his neighbour was Basoos bint Manqadh, who was the

aunt of Jassaas ibn Murrah. The leader of the Taghlib tribe, Kaleeb, sheltered his camels in a special location. One day, Jarmee's she-camel wandered away and ended up among Kaleeb's flock. Upon seeing the strange camel, Kaleeb fired an arrow at it and killed it. Jarmee was furious, and so was his neighbour, Basoos. When Basoos's nephew, Jassaas, learned of what had happened, he didn't think that he should go to Kaleeb and discuss the matter with him, perhaps telling him that he should pay for the she-camel. Instead, he went and killed Kaleeb. And again, no one from the Kaleeb tribe thought about resolving the matter through non-violent means. They simply attacked the Bakr tribe; what ensued was a bitter war that lasted for 40 years and that began with the simple killing of a she-camel.

In the second example, it was the 'Abas and Dhubyaa tribes that fought one another. Their war began with the day that is remembered as the "Day of Daahis and Al-Ghabraa." On that day, Daahis and Ghabraa, which were the names of two horses that belonged to the two aforementioned tribes, were set to race against each other. Qais ibn Zaheer owned Daahis, and Hudhaifah ibn Badr owned Al-Ghabraa. The latter of the two men instructed someone to wait in the valley and to intervene somehow if he saw that Daahis was in the lead. Since Daahis was in fact in the lead upon entering the valley, Hudhaifah's henchman struck the horse as it raced by, and it fell into a stream. Al-Ghabraa of course ended up winning the race, but when it was established that foul play had been at work, fighting took place. Some people died during the fighting, and a cycle of violence erupted, which soon escalated into a full-fledged war, all of which began with a simple horserace.

Some of the wars that had a direct impact on Islamic history were the ones that took place between the Aus and Khazraj tribes of Al-Madeenah; for it was the Aus and Khazraj tribes that eventually became known as the *Ansaar*, once they embraced Islam and welcomed their migrating brothers from Makkah with open arms and hearts.

The Aus and Khazraj tribes were actually related through blood, for the members of both tribes were descended from the line of Haarithah ibn Tha'labah Al-Azdee. These tribes came to and settled in Yathrib, which later became known as Al-Madeenah, after they, among many other others, were displaced because of the great Flood of 'Arim. Some Jewish tribes also came to and settled in Yathrib; the primary reason why they settled there was that they were fleeing from oppression at the hands of the Romans.

At first, the Aus, the Khazraj, and the Jewish tribes of Yathrib lived together in relative harmony and peace. But then fighting took place among them, and wars continued intermittently until the advent of Islam. Sometimes, the Aus were fighting the Khazraj; at other times, the Khazraj were fighting the Jewish tribes; alliances constantly shifted. Very often, the Jewish tribes would switch alliances and sow dissension between the Aus and the Khazraj, their goal being to remain the dominant force in Yathrib. In the latter days of their wars, the Jews of Yathrib were allied to the Aus tribe, and the Aus tribe ended up with the upper hand over the Khazraj. The two tribes agreed to live in peace and under one king, 'Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool, who was about to be crowned around the time that the Aus and Khazraj tribes pledged to believe in, obey, and defend the Prophet ﷺ. 'Abdullah ibn Ubai never forgot about the crown he never got to wear; his bitterness prompted him to fight Islam from within the ranks of Muslims: Outwardly, he claimed to be a Muslim, but inwardly he disbelieved in Islam. History remembers him as being the chief of the hypocrites.

Other than wars that were waged for honour or revenge, some tribes made a living out of attacking other tribes; they would attack a tribe, steal its wealth, and enslave its free men. Some famous Companions رضي الله عنه became enslaved in this or a similar manner; two noteworthy examples are Zaid ibn Haarithah رضي الله عنه, who was a free Arab, and Salmaan Al-Faarisee رضي الله عنه, who was a free Persian. Islam brought an end to such vile and violent practices, to

the extent that a man and woman could travel from San'aa to Hadramoot, without having to fear harm at the hands of any human being; during their journey, they would fear no one save Allah, as well as wolves upon their herd of sheep.

7) Arabs were at a near 100% illiteracy level

Unlike their contemporaries from the People of the Book – Jews and Christians – Arabs were an illiterate people; in short, they were ignorant, and they intransigently held on to the beliefs of their forebears, regardless of whether those beliefs were true or false. Very few people among them could read or write. They had some people among them who became skilled in the art of tracking, and some who practiced medicine, such as Al-Haarith ibn Kildah. It must be noted in their favour that the medicine they practiced was based not on superstitious beliefs, but on the experience they collectively gained through generations of practice.

Despite being illiterate and ignorant, they showed great potential for learning, being endowed with a natural intelligence. Once true knowledge came to them by way of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, many among them became eminent scholars and skilled jurists; they went from a near 100% illiteracy level to a near 100% literacy level.

The Manners And Morals Of Arabs


In many ways, Arabs of pre-Islamic times were loathsome in their manners and morals: They consumed great quantities of alcohol. and they gambled frequently; they would shed blood for the most inconsequential of reasons; they would usurp the wealth of orphans, steal, deal in usury, and fornicate. It must be noted, however, that it was only female slaves and fallen women who fornicated; very rarely were free women guilty of that crime. After the conquest of Makkah, when the Prophet ﷺ was taking pledges of allegiance from women, he mentioned that they must not associate any partner with Allah ﷻ, and that they must neither steal nor fornicate. Upon hearing this, Hind bint 'Utbah ؓ, wife of Abu Sufyaan ؓ, said in surprise, "And does a free woman fornicate?"

Not all Arabs practiced the aforementioned evils. Many among them didn't fornicate; some didn't drink alcohol or needlessly shed blood; some would not even contemplate the idea of dealing in usury or stealing the wealth of an orphan. And to be fair, Arabs had many good qualities as well, which made them well-prepared for the duty of carrying the banner of Islam. Here are some of those good qualities:

1) A Natural Intelligence

This natural intelligence took on different forms. First, they had very powerful memories. Consider the vastness of their language. In Arabic, there are 80 words that mean "honey"; 90, that mean "fox"; 500, that mean "lion"; 1000, that mean "camel," and 1000 that mean "sword." To be sure, to be able to memorize all of these words, Arabs had to have very strong memories.

Arabs were illiterate, yet they loved poetry as much as, or more than, any other literate and civilized people. But in order to preserve poetry, and in order to pass it down to posterity, they had to rely on verbal communication and on powerful memories to retain long poems. Their love of language, and lack of distractions, such as the mind-numbing television screen, further promoted the development of powerful memories.

Once they became Muslims, Arabs used this quality for the service of Islam. One should not be surprised, therefore, to learn that many of the Prophet's Companions  memorized the Qur'an, and that some individuals among them memorized hundreds, or in some cases thousands, of *Hadeeth* narrations and then conveyed them to the following generation of Muslims.

A second quality that Arabs possessed was an innocence that can be described as ignorance of falsehood. Arcane and convoluted philosophy, superstitions, legends, and complicated beliefs were far from the minds of Arabs. Their disbelief was not built upon a complicated system of false notions and premises, as was the case regarding the Romans, Greeks, and Persians. For truth to establish itself firmly in the mind of a person, falsehood must first be

eradicated. As for a Greek philosopher, for example, his falsehood was based on thousands of false premises, since his philosophy was so complicated and detailed. All of those false premises had to be destroyed in his mind before the truth could enter it. As for the average Arab, he had no complicated system of beliefs, and he even believed in Allah ﷻ. The few false notions he had about idol worship were easily refuted. Thus Arabs were naturally prepared to receive the truth – the message of Islam.

2) Generosity

The quality of generosity was deeply rooted among Arabs. If an Arab owned nothing save a camel, and if a guest came to visit him, he would, without giving the matter a second thought, slaughter the camel and feed its meat to his guest. Of all Arabs, it was perhaps Al-Haatim At-Taaee who was most widely renowned for his generosity; stories of his generous acts were spoken of and lauded in gatherings all over Arabia.

3) Bravery

Arabs would praise a man for having died on the battlefield, and would disparage and satirize a man who died peacefully on his bed. One Arab commented upon hearing about the death of his brother, "If he has been killed, his father, brother, and uncle before him have also been killed. By Allah, we do not die of natural causes."

Nothing meant more to Arabs than individual honour and the honour of one's clan and tribe. If anyone dared to attack their honour, they would defend it with their very lives. Although some Arabs fought for inconsequential reasons, and others fought for evil ends, many Arabs fought to uphold justice, very often not for themselves but for the weak, the old, and the helpless. They would consider it a blemish on their character if they didn't help the oppressed or ill-treated person who came to them seeking their help and protection.

4) Love of freedom, and hatred of subjugation and humiliation

For the most part, the major empires of the time – the Roman Empire and the Persian Empire – did not interfere in the lives of Arabs. The wide desert of the Peninsula was the home of the Arab, who loved freedom and was not under the direct control of any king or ruler. His honour meant more to him than his very life. If anyone dared to humiliate him, he wouldn't think twice about killing him.

The following is an example, albeit an extreme one, of that love of honour and freedom in action. 'Amr ibn Hind was the king of Al-Heerah, and he once arrogantly said to his companions, "Do you know of any Arab whose mother would refuse to serve my mother?" They said, "Yes, the mother of 'Amr ibn Khulthoom, the poor poet."

The king invited 'Amr ibn Kulthoom to visit him, and ibn Khulthoom's mother to visit his mother. The king instructed his mother to ask the guest, upon the completion of their meal, to hand her a serving tray. The king's mother did as she was told, and 'Amr ibn Kulthoom's mother answered, "Let the one who needs something get it herself!" The king's mother repeated her request and insisted that the guest serve her, but instead of doing as she asked, 'Amr ibn Kulthoom's mother yelled out, "What humiliation! O Taghlib (Taghlib was the name of her tribe)." Her son heard her screaming. Feeling enraged at this affront to his honour and the honour of his mother, 'Amr ibn Kulthoom took hold of a sword that was hanging nearby and killed the king with a single lethal blow to the head.

5) Truthfulness, keeping promises, and honesty

In general, Arabs avoided lying. This reality is perhaps best highlighted by a story involving Abu Sufyaan. When he was still a polytheist and a bitter foe of Islam, Abu Sufyaan traveled abroad and met Haraq, the leader of a foreign empire. Haraq

began to ask questions about the Prophet ﷺ and about the new religion in Makkah. Abu Sufyaan could have best served his purposes by lying about the Prophet ﷺ, for to speak truthfully about him involved praising him for his good character, noble lineage, and truthful speech. And it was not politically wise to praise the Prophet ﷺ in front of a foreign leader, who had the potential of embracing Islam and of wreaking havoc upon the Quraish. Nonetheless, Abu Sufyaan did speak truthfully about the Prophet ﷺ; he later said, "Had it not been for (me being) shy of them ascribing a lie to me, I would have lied against him (i.e., against the Prophet ﷺ)." [1]

Faithfulness was a quality that was deeply ingrained in the souls of Arabs; however, they often took faithfulness to an extreme, acting in an incorrect and needlessly violent manner. Islam directed their faithfulness in the right direction. No matter how faithful one of them was to his relative or friend, Islam forbade him from supporting him if he was a wrongdoer. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah curses someone who supports (shelters, helps) a *Muhdith* (one who perpetrates vile deeds or introduces something new into the religion)." [2]

The following story, which is set in pre-Islamic times, exemplifies how, no matter what the cost, an honourable Arab would remain true to his word. Al-Haarith ibn 'Ibaad led an army that consisted of the various subtribes of the Bakr tribe; the goal of the expedition was to attack the Taghlib tribe, but Al-Haarith had a more personal goal in mind: To find and kill the leader of the Taghlib tribe, Al-Muhalhal, who had killed his son in a previous incident. Al-Haarith came across Al-Muhalhal and took him captive, but there was only one problem: He had never before seen Muhalhal, and so he didn't recognize him. Al-Haarith said to his prisoner, "Tell me where Muhalhal ibn Rabee'ah is, and I will free you." The prisoner said, "I have your promise (to free me) if I guide you to him." Al-Haarith said, "Yes." The prisoner said,

[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Beginning of Revelation." *Hadeeth* number: 7.

[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Sacrifices." *Hadeeth* number: 1978.

"Then I am him." Without harming Muhalhal, Al-Haarith simply let him go, showing a wonderful display of faithfulness that truly deserves admiration.

Another example involves An-No'maan ibn Al-Mundhir, who feared for his life after he refused to give his daughter's hand in marriage to the emperor Kisra. Having first placed his family and weapons in the safekeeping of Haani ibn Mas'ood Ash-Shaibaanee, An-No'maan traveled to Kisra, who treated him very harshly. Kisra sent a message to Haani, demanding that he hand over all that An-No'maan had entrusted him with, but Haani refused. And so Kisra sent an army to fight Haani and his tribe.

Haani gathered his fellow tribesmen and delivered the following sermon: "O people of Bakr, one who is killed yet has an excuse is better than one who is safe yet has fled (from the battlefield). Indeed, caution does not protect one from preordainment. And indeed, patience is one of the causes of victory. I say yes to death, but no to humiliation and baseness. To head towards death is better than to turn away from it, and to be stabbed in the upper part of the chest is better than to be stabbed in the back (i.e., while fleeing). O people of Bakr, fight, for death must come to us all."^[1]

In choosing between living and fulfilling his promise, Haani chose the latter, yet as happens so frequently in life, he sought out death but was granted life (the opposite happens just as frequently: those who seek out comfort and life are often met by death in a most unexpected manner). In the Battle of Dhee Qaar, the Bakr tribe fought valiantly and triumphed over their Persian foes.

6) Patience in hard times and contentment with the bare necessities

Arabs consumed food in moderate quantities. They looked down upon the person who ate too much, and when they would finish eating a meal, it was not uncommon for them to say, "Gluttony does away with intelligence." Arabs had an uncanny ability to

^[1] *Taareekh At-Tabaree* (2/207).

endure hardship, a quality that they probably developed through living in the harsh desert for many generations. Low supplies of food and water, tortuous and rocky mountain pathways, the extreme heat of the desert – nothing seemed to perturb them. Once they embraced Islam, they had to be more patient than ever before; in harsh times, one of them would go days with only a small number of dates and some drops of water.

7) Showing mercy when revenge was within one's grasp

Arabs did not back down from fighting their enemies, but it frequently occurred that, at the very moment when one of them had the upper hand against his enemy, and had the ability to pounce on him, he forgave him and left him alone. Arabs were also known to show mercy on the battlefield, in that they wouldn't kill their wounded opponents.

These are just some of the good qualities that Arabs possessed during the days of ignorance. Islam then came and developed those qualities, channeling them in the right direction. With their inherent goodness being strengthened by *Eemaan* and piety, they conquered countries and the hearts of people, filling the earth with faith, after it had become replete with disbelief; with justice, after it had become overrun by oppression and wrongdoing; and with goodness, after it had become overwhelmed by falsehood and evil.

What better can be said about Arabs than that among them was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ? The Persians, the Romans, the Indians, and the Greeks – none of these were chosen to have among them the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, despite the vast knowledge of the Persians, the philosophy of the Indians, the skilled arts of the Romans, and the genius of the Greeks. In spite of their more advanced civilizations, the above-mentioned peoples were not chosen to have the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in their midst. As primitive and uncivilized as they were in some regards, Arabs possessed, more so than others, a sound inherent nature and an overall preparedness to receive, embrace, and then disseminate the message of Islam.

4

Some Important Events That Took Place Before The Birth Of The Prophet ﷺ

Before delving into the study of the Prophet's birth and early years, we discuss in this section those events that had a direct bearing on Islam, that represented the dark days of pre-Islamic ignorance, or that signaled the great change that was about to take place in Arabia and in the entire world. True, the earth was immersed in darkness; but it is from Allah's *Sunan* (ways; *Sunan* is plural of *Sunnah*) regarding the universe that relief comes after hardship, that light comes after darkness, and that ease comes after difficulty.

'Abdul-Muttalib Digs The Well Of Zamzam

In his highly beneficial book, *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiiyyah*, Shaikh Ibraaheem Al-'Alee mentioned an authentic narration that describes how 'Abdul-Muttalib found and dug the well of *Zamzam*. Of course, it was Haajar who first found the well of *Zamzam*, but history books record that, because of the wickedness of later generations, the *Zamzam* well became buried and, if not forgotten, then at least lost - until the time of 'Abdul-Muttalib. 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ related that Abdul-Muttalib said, "While I was sleeping in Al-Hijr (a part of the Ka'bah that is on its northern side), someone came to me and said, 'Dig *Taibah* (*Taibah* comes from the word *Tayyib*, which means goodness).' 'And what is *Taibah*?' I asked, but he then left me. On the following day, I returned to my place of sleep (in Al-Hijr). When I fell asleep there, he came to me (again) and said,

'Dig *Barrah* (*Barrah* comes from the word *Birr*, which means goodness and purity).' 'And what is *Barrah*?' I asked, but he (again) left me. On the following day, I returned to my place of sleep. And when I fell asleep there, he came to me and said, 'Dig *Al-Madnoonah*.' 'And what is *Al-Madnoonah*?' I asked, but he left (again without answering me). On the following day, I returned to my place of sleep. After I fell asleep there, he came to me and said, 'Dig *Zamzam*.' 'And what is *Zamzam*?' I asked. He said, 'It (is a well that) never runs dry, and it is not dispraised (i.e., it is fresh and good). It is drink for the greater pilgrims (i.e., those who come for *Hajj*). And it is situated (so go and find it there) between excrement and blood, at the eyehole of the Al-'Asim crow (i.e., the crow that has whiteness in its legs), at the village of the ants.'"

After he was made aware of the significance and location of the *Zamzam* well, 'Abdul-Muttalib went out (to search for it) with an axe. He took along with him Al-Haarith ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib, who was, at the time, 'Abdul-Muttalib's only son. When 'Abdul-Muttalib saw the edge of the well, he magnified Allah ﷻ, by exclaiming, "*Allahuakbar* (Allah is the Greatest)!" By the sound of his voice, the Quraish knew that he found what he had been looking for, and so they went to him. They said, "O 'Abdul-Muttalib, this indeed is the well of our father, Ismaa'eel, and we have a right over it, so make us a partner to you in it (i.e., in its ownership)." He said, "I will not do so; this is a matter for which I, and not you, have been specifically chosen, and which I have been given from among you." They said, "Then do us justice, for we will not leave you alone, but will instead dispute with you over it." He said, "Then appoint whomsoever you wish, and we will take the matter to him for judgment." They said, "(We choose) the soothsayer of Banu Sa'd ibn Hudhaim." He said, "Yes (agreed)." The man they had chosen lived in the border regions of Ash-Sham (the area of Ash-Sham consists of Syria and neighbouring lands). With a group of companions from his subtribe – the children of 'Abd-Manaaf – 'Abdul-Muttalib set out for the journey to Ash-Sham. Joining them on the journey was a group of people from

every subtribe of the Quraish. Between them and their destination was a vast desert land, void of any villages or townships; so the journey was not going to be an easy one. And it proved difficult indeed, for, at some point during the journey, 'Abdul-Muttalib and his companions ran out of water. They then remained thirsty for so long that they were sure that death was imminent. The other subtribes, however, did have water, but when the children of 'Abd-Manaaf asked them for some, they refused, saying, "We are in the desert, and we fear that what happened to you will happen to us (if we are too free with our water)." 'Abdul-Muttalib said to his companions, "I think that each man among you should now bury his own grave, using the strength he still has with him. Whenever a man among you dies, the others can push him into his hole and then bury him, until there remains one man, since it is better for one man to be lost (without a burial) than for the entire caravan to be lost." They said, "Good indeed is the command you have given us."

Each man among them dug his grave and then sat down, waiting for his death. But then 'Abdul-Muttalib said to them, "By Allah, for us to kill ourselves in this manner will not make us deserving of (praise) on earth, and we should not be weak like this. Perhaps Allah will provide us with water in some land (ahead of us), so prepare to move on." They were getting ready to leave, when 'Abdul-Muttalib made his camel stand up, and gushing forth from underneath its hooves was a spring of fresh water. 'Abdul-Muttalib and his companions exclaimed, "*Allahuakbar* (Allah is the Greatest)." They all drank water and filled their containers. They then invited the other subtribes of the Quraish, who, all the while, had been watching their every move.

Abdul-Muttalib said, "Come to this water, for Allah has indeed provided us with drink." They came, drank, and filled their containers with water. They then said, "By Allah, we will never again enter into a dispute with you regarding *Zamzam*, for the One Who has given you this water to drink in this barren land, is indeed the One Who gave you *Zamzam* to drink. So return to your water rightly-guided." There being no point to go to the soothsayer of

Banu Sa'd, they all returned to Makkah, and no one thereafter argued about 'Abdul-Muttalib's right to have complete control over the *Zamzam* well.

After he related this narration, Ibn Ishaq wrote, "This is what has reached me from 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ regarding *Zamzam*." [1] Many other narrations are related in regard to the superiority and virtues of *Zamzam* water. An example is a narration that is related in *Saheeh Muslim*; in it, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Indeed, it (*Zamzam* water) is blessed; indeed, it is *Ta'aam To'om* (i.e., just as food fills a person, *Zamzam* water fills a person who drinks it)." [2]

Ad-Daaraqutnee and Al-Haakim related from Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "*Zamzam* water achieves the purpose for which it is consumed: If you drink it to seek a cure, Allah will cure you; if you drink it to make you full, Allah will make you full; if you drink it to cut off your thirst, Allah will (cut off your thirst). It is the *Hazma* of Jibreel (i.e., the effect of his striking the ground with his ankle or wing), and the drink Allah provided to Ismaa'eel." Al-Haakim declared this *Hadeeth* to be authentic. Shaikh Muhammad Abu Shohbah, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "Whatever the case may be, Al-Haafiz Ad-Dimyaaate - one of the later eminent Huffaaz- ruled that the *Hadeeth*, '*Zamzam* water achieves the purpose for which it is consumed,' is authentic. And Al-Haafiz Al-'Iraaqee concurred with him on that ruling." [3]

[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/142-155); also, *As-Siyyar Wal-Maghaazee* by Ibn Ishaq (pgs. 24, 25); and *Ad-Dalaail* by Al-Baihaqee (1/93-95). Ibn Ishaq explicitly mentioned that he heard the narration (from the next narrator), and so the chain of the narration is authentic. Also, it is corroborated by a *Mursal* narration from Az-Zuhree. The *Hadeeth* is authentic by way of Al-Baihaqee and Ibn Hishaam.

[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Virtues of the Companions"; chapter, "Some of the Virtues of Abu Dharr ؓ." *Hadeeth* number: 2473.

[3] *Muqaddimah ibn As-Salaah*, and its Explanation by Al-Haafiz Al-'Iraaqee (pg. 13).

The People Of The Elephant

Their story is established both in the Qur'an and in the *Sunnah*, and its details are related in various history books. As for the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ۚ ① أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضَلُّلٍ ۚ ② وَارْسَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ③ تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارٍ مِّنْ سِجِّيلٍ ④ فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ⑤﴾

“Have you (O Muhammad ﷺ) not seen how your Lord dealt with the owners of the elephant? (The elephant army which came from Yemen under the command of Abraha Al-Ashram intending to destroy the Ka'bah at Makkah). Did He not make their plot go astray? And sent against them birds, in flocks, striking them with stones of Sijjil. And made them like an empty field of stalks (of which the corn has been eaten up by cattle).” (Qur'an 105: 1-5)

And as for the *Sunnah*, it is related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree* that, when the Prophet ﷺ set out during the time of Al-Hudaibiyyah, he continued until he reached Ath-Thaniyyah – the mountain upon which is the road that descends onto the people of Makkah – but his camel knelt down, ostensibly refusing to proceed forward. The people said, *Hal! Hal! Hal*, is what one would say to a camel when it stopped in its tracks. But it remained firmly where it was. The people said, “Al-Qaswaa (the riding camel of the Prophet ﷺ) has refused to move forward!” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Al-Qaswaa has not refused, for that is not one of its characteristics. But rather He Who restrained the elephant (of Abraha) has restrained it (i.e., just as Allah ﷻ prevented the elephant of Abraha from proceeding forward, He ﷻ was preventing Al-Qaswaa from doing the same).”^[1]

^{1]} *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Book of Conditions”; chapter, “The Conditions of Performing *Jihaad* and Making Treaties with the People of War.” *Hadeeth* number: 2731.

In *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*, Abu Haatim related the story of the People of the Elephant in some detail; the following is his account (in abridged form). A king in Yemen captured and tamed the elephant that is significant to this story; that king was originally from Abyssinia, and his name was Abraha. He built a church in Sinai, and called it Al-Qulais, claiming that he would be able to make Arab pilgrims congregate at Al-Qulais instead of at the Ka'bah, in Makkah. But he felt that he first needed to do away with his competition, which meant destroying the Ka'bah, so he made an oath to go to the Ka'bah and fulfill his goal of destroying it.

One of the kings of Himyar, Duh Nafar, came out to fight Abraha; the latter defeated the former and took him as a prisoner. Upon being taken to Abraha, Dhu Nafar said, "O king, do not kill me, for keeping me alive (to help you) is better for you than killing me." Abraha spared him, though he made sure to tie him up. He then set out with his army, clearly intending to go to the Ka'bah. Along the way, when he reached the lands of Kath'am, he faced resistance from An-Nufail ibn Habeeb Al-Kath'amee and some Yemeni tribes that supported him. Abraha's army was victorious, and An-Nufail was taken captive. An-Nufail said, "O king, I am very knowledgeable about the lands of the Arabs, so don't kill me. Here are my two hands, which I use to pledge to you complete obedience from my people." Abraha spared him, and he became Abraha's new guide. When the army reached Taaif, now ever closer to Makkah, Mas'ood ibn Mu'attib and some men from the Taqheef tribe came out to meet Abraha. Mas'ood said, "O king, we are your slaves. You have no dispute with us, and what you want is not with us. What you want is nothing other than the House that is in Makkah. We will send with you one who will guide you to it." They sent one of their slaves, whose name was Abu Rughaal; but Abu Rughaal ended up being of no use to Abraha, for he died along the way at Al-Maghmas. His grave is known, and has long been a place where people go in order to pelt it with stones.

From Al-Maghmas, Abraha sent a man named Al-Aswad ibn

Maqsood to the forefront of his army. Al-Aswad and those with him were met by the dwellers of Makkah, and were able to seize 200 camels that belonged to 'Abdul-Muttalib.

Then Abraha sent Hunaatah Al-Humairee to the people of Makkah, giving him the following instructions, "Ask for the most honourable one among them; then inform him that I have not come to fight, but only to destroy this House (i.e., the Ka'bah)." After Hunaatah entered Makkah, he met 'Abdul-Muttalib ibn Haashim and said, "Verily, the king has sent me to you, to inform you that he has not come to fight, unless you fight him; rather, he comes only to destroy this House. As soon as he accomplishes his mission, he will leave you."

'Abdul-Muttalib said, "We will not fight him; we will free up all that lies between him and the house (i.e., we will not stand in his way, but will instead depart Makkah for a while). If Allah puts nothing in his way to stop him from reaching it, then, by Allah, we have no strength against him."

'Abdul-Muttalib accompanied Hunaatah back to the encampment of Abraha's army. Dhu Nafar was a friend of Abdul-Muttalib, so when the latter reached the front of the army's encampment, Dhu Nafar visited him.

"O Dhu Nafar," began 'Abdul-Muttalib, "Is there anything you can do to help us in this (affliction) that has descended upon us?"

"What help can a prisoner offer when he is not safe from being killed at any time during the morning or evening?" said Dhu Nafar. "But I will send for Anees, the stableman of the elephant. I will order him to do what he can for you with the king, and to elevate your ranking with him." Anees was then sent for and when he arrived, Dhu Nafar said to him, "This is the chief of the Quraish, the owner of Makkah's caravan, which feeds people in the plains and beasts in the mountains. The king has taken 200 of his camels. If you are able to benefit him, then do so, for he is a friend of mine."

Anees then entered upon Abraha and said, "O king! This is the

chief of the Quraish and the owner of Makkah's caravan, which feeds people in the plains and beasts in the mountains. He asks permission to enter upon you, and I hope that you permit him, for he comes showing you neither hostility nor opposition." Abraha granted permission for him to enter.

'Abdul-Muttalib was a huge, muscular, and handsome man; so when Abraha saw him, he welcomed and honoured him. Disliking both for 'Abdul-Muttalib to sit with him on his bed, and for 'Abdul-Muttalib to sit beneath him, Abraha descended to the carpet beneath the bed and sat down beside 'Abdul-Muttalib.

"O king," said 'Abdul-Muttalib, "You have taken a great deal of wealth from me, so return it to me."

"You indeed impressed me when I saw you, but I withdraw (that admiration) from you."

"And why?" asked 'Abdul-Muttalib.

"I have come to the House that is your religion and the religion of your fathers and that is your sanctuary and protection - for the purpose of destroying it. You do not speak to me about that, yet you speak to me about (a meager) 200 camels that belong to you!"

"I am the lord of these camels," said 'Abdul-Muttalib. "This House has a Lord Who will defend it."

"He would not defend it from me," said Abraha.

"Then that is your affair," said 'Abdul-Muttalib. Abraha issued a command, upon which 'Abdul-Muttalib's camels were promptly returned to him. 'Abdul-Muttalib returned to the Quraish, informed them of what was happening, and ordered them to seek shelter in the mountain passes of Makkah. From Al-Maghmas, Abraha was poised to enter Makkah. He ordered his army to reload their supplies. His elephant was brought to him, and he had it loaded with supplies while it was standing on all fours.

When they were ready to proceed towards Makkah, the elephant was prodded into marching forward, but it stood still. It almost bundled itself up and knelt to the ground. They struck it with a

pickaxe in the head, but it still refused to move even an inch forward. They tried again to make it move, but it stood there, motionless. They directed it back towards Yemen, and it raced in that direction; but no sooner did they make it face Makkah again than it stopped. The elephant then made its way to one of the mountains in that area.

As for the army, Allah ﷻ sent from the sea birds like *Balasaan* (starling birds). With each bird were three stones, two in its legs and one in its beak. The stones they carried were like chickpeas or lentils. When they flew over the army, they hurled the stones down upon them. If any person in the army was hit with a stone, he died, but not all of the people in the army were hit. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِي تَرَىٰ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ۚ ۱) الَّذِي جَعَلَ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ ۚ ۲) وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ۚ ۳) تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ۚ ۴) فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ۚ ۵)﴾

“Have you (O Muhammad ﷺ) not seen how your Lord dealt with the owners of the elephant? (The elephant army which came from Yemen under the command of Abraha Al-Ashram intending to destroy the Ka’bah at Makkah). Did He not make their plot go astray? And sent against them birds, in flocks, striking them with stones of Sijjil (back clay). And made them like an empty field of stalks (of which the corn has been eaten up by cattle).”
(Qur’an 105: 1-5)

And Allah ﷻ sent upon Abraha a disease in his body. His soldiers fled back towards Yemen, and (their body parts) were falling off in every land (they passed through). Abraha’s fingertips began to fall off. After each fingertip fell off, it was followed by a discharge of pus and blood. When he reached Yemen, he was like a young bird among those who remained from his companions (perhaps this refers to how few they were in number). And then he died.^[1]

[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Haatim As-Subtee (pgs. 34-39); also refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Katheer (1/pgs. 30-37).

Both Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hishaam – may Allah have mercy on them both – related that while Abraha was marching with his army towards Makkah, ‘Abdul-Muttalib went to the *Masjid* and took hold of the ring on the door of the Ka’bah. Then, he and a group of men from the Quraish supplicated to Allah ﷻ, asking for His help against Abraha and his army. Then ‘Abdul-Muttalib let go of the ring, and headed off with his fellow tribesmen to the peaks of nearby mountains, where they intended to be on the lookout, waiting to see what Abraha was going to do once he entered Makkah. The narrator of this story then described the way in which Abraha and his army were destroyed.^[1]

Lessons and Morals taken from the Story of The Elephant

- 1) A sense of the inviolability of the Ka’bah is one of the most important of things that one should take away from this story. Even Arab polytheists from pre-Islamic times honoured and sanctified the Ka’bah. The significance that the Ka’bah had in their minds is one of the remnants of Ibraaheem’s religion that remained in Makkah even throughout the dark years of its history when polytheism was the dominant religion of its inhabitants.
- 2) To save what is sanctified and holy, one often needs to make sacrifices, which is exactly what many Arab tribes did when the Ka’bah’s sanctity, and very existence, was at stake. First, one of the kings of Himyar fought against Abraha, but was then taken captive. And then An-Nufail ibn Habeeb Al-Khath’amee, along with other tribes from Yemen, fought Abraha, though they were of course no challenge against his huge army. They knew they were no challenge, but the point is that they still fought to preserve what they valued.
- 3) The traitors of a nation ultimately bring disgrace upon themselves. Some Arabs volunteered to be Abraha’s spies;

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam, along with the commentary of Abu Dharr Al-Khushanee (1/pg. 84-91).

others agreed to guide him to the Ka'bah, so that he could then destroy it. Such people are cursed in this life and in the Hereafter. Consider the example of Abu Rughaal, whose grave has become a symbol of treachery. Throughout the centuries, people have felt hatred for him in their hearts. And whenever someone passes by his grave, he pelts it with stones.

- 4) 'Abdul-Muttalib said, "We will not fight him; we will free up all that lies between him and the house (i.e., we will not stand in his way, but will instead depart Makkah for a while). If Allah puts nothing in his way to stop him from reaching it, then, by Allah, we have no strength against him." This venerable sage from pre-Islamic times provided clear insight into the reality of the war that takes place between Allah ﷻ and His enemies. No matter how strong and numerous those enemies are, they cannot withstand, not even for the smallest, minutest fraction of a nanosecond, the Might and Power of Allah ﷻ. It is He ﷻ Who grants life, and He can take it away at any moment He pleases. Al-Qaasimee (may Allah have mercy on him) related that Al-Qaashaanee (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "The story of the People of the Elephant is famously known, and it took place near the era of the Messenger ﷺ. Their story is one of the signs of Allah's power and of the effects of His wrath upon those who are brazen enough to violate what He has made sanctified."
- 5) It is important to understand that Arabs honoured Allah's Inviolable House – the Ka'bah – which Allah ﷻ has taken upon Himself to preserve and protect from the harm of evildoers; furthermore, and this is very significant to understand the history of those times, they honoured the Quraish. They would say about the Quraish, "They are the people of Allah. May Allah fight on their behalf and be sufficient for them against their enemies." That veneration and honour was a sign from Allah ﷻ, and a prelude to the sending of a Prophet ﷺ to Makkah, one who would come and purify the Ka'bah from idols, and return to it its high ranking and significance.

- 6) Many scholars – such as Al-Maawardee and Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on them both – maintain that the story of the elephant is one of the signs of the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ. The events of the story point to the advent of Muhammad ﷺ, who was in his mother's womb when they occurred; he ﷺ was born 50 days later.

As the Prophet's birth approached, many signs occurred that affirmed his Prophethood and blessedness; one of the greatest of those signs was what happened to Abraha and his army. How so? First, had the Quraish fought Abraha and lost the battle, they would have been taken as slaves and prisoners. But Allah ﷻ destroyed Abraha, thus protecting the Prophet ﷺ from being born a slave. Second, based on their beliefs and practices, the Quraish did not deserve to be protected from the army of the elephant; they weren't from the People of the Book; rather, they were idol worshippers who were far astray from the truth. When it came to protecting Makkah, what was important was honouring the Ka'bah and paving the way for the Prophet ﷺ.

When Arabs learned of what Allah ﷻ did with the Army of the Elephant, they felt awe and veneration for Makkah, and they treated the Quraish with greater honour than ever before.

Ibn Taymiyyah – may Allah have mercy on him – said, “(The events that took place during Abraha's attempted attack on Makkah) occurred in the year during which the Prophet ﷺ was born. Those who lived beside the House (i.e., the Ka'bah) were polytheists – they worshipped idols. The religion of the Christians (which was the religion of Abraha) was better than their religion; therefore, this sign (the miraculous destruction of Abraha's army) did not take place for the sake of those who lived beside the Ka'bah at that time, but instead for the sake of the House itself, or for the sake of the Prophet ﷺ, who was born that year beside the House, or for both the House and the Prophet ﷺ. Whatever the case, it was from the signs of his

Prophethood.”^[1]

And while he was discussing the story of the elephant, Ibn Katheer – may Allah have mercy on him – said, “This was a sign and a prelude to the sending of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, for he – according to the most famous of accounts – was born in that year. It was as if it was being said to the Quraish: ‘O people of the Quraish, Allah did not help you against the people of Abyssinia because you are better than them; rather, He ﷻ (destroyed Abraha’s army) to preserve the Ancient House (i.e., the Ka’bah), which He ﷻ will honour with the sending of the illiterate Prophet, Muhammad – O Allah, send prayers and salutations upon him – who is the Seal of the Prophets.”^[2]

- 7) Allah ﷻ did not permit the People of the Book – Abraha and his fellow Christians – to destroy the Ka’bah and take control of the holy city of Makkah, even though its sanctity was being defiled by polytheism. According to Allah’s Decree, Makkah was intended to be free from the rule of a tyrant, so that new and correct beliefs could develop and thrive in an atmosphere of relative freedom. Such was Allah’s planning for His House and religion, even before anyone knew that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was going to be born in that same year.

In remembering the story of Abraha, we should feel consolation and hope when we see the imperial designs of those who greedily look at our lands – and especially our holy lands – with hopes of conquest. Allah ﷻ protected His House from the People of the Book when Makkah was inhabited by polytheists; now both Makkah and Al-Madeenah are inhabited by Muslims, and so He certainly will – *In Sha Allah* – defend and protect both holy lands from evildoers.

- 8) News of Abraha’s miraculous demise spread all over Arabia;

^[1] *Al-Jawaab As-Saheeh* (4/122).

^[2] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (4/548, 549).

Arabs considered the event to be so important that they dated their calendar based on it. They would say, "Such and such happened in the Year of the Elephant," or, "Such and such happened 8 years after the Year of the Elephant." The Year of the Elephant corresponds to the year 570 of the Christian calendar. Of course, "the Year of the Elephant" did not last very long as the standard upon which Arabs based their calendar; with the advent of Islam, the new standard became the migration of the Prophet ﷺ to Al-Madeenah.

From The Birth Of The Noble Prophet ﷺ Until The *Fudool* Confederacy

The Lineage Of The Prophet ﷺ

Just as he ﷺ is the most complete of people in terms of character, the Prophet ﷺ is superior to all other human beings in terms of his noble lineage. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, Allah - 'Azza wa-Jall (the Possessor of might and majesty) - chose Ismaa'eel from the children of Ibraaheem; Kinaanah from the children of Ismaa'eel; Quraish from Kinaanah; the children of Haashim from Quraish; and me from the children of Haashim."^[1]

Imam Bukhaaree, may Allah have mercy on him - mentioned the lineage of the Prophet ﷺ (keep in mind that 'ibn' means, 'son of'):
"He is Abul-Qaasim Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ibn Haashim ibn 'Abd-Manaaf ibn Qusai ibn Kilaab ibn Murrah ibn Ka'ab ibn Luaiy ibn Ghaalib ibn Faihr ibn Maalik ibn An-Nadar ibn Kinaanah ibn Khuzaimah ibn Mudrikah ibn Ilyaaas ibn Mudar ibn Nizaar ibn Ma'ad ibn 'Adnaan."^[2]

In *Sharhus-Sunnah*, Al-Bagawee mentioned the Prophet's lineage up until 'Adnaan, and then said, "Beyond 'Adnaan, his lineage is

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Virtues", chapter, "The Superiority of the Prophet's Lineage" *Hadeeth* number 2776

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Virtues of the *Ansaar*", chapter, "The Sending of the Prophet ﷺ" *Hadeeth* number 3851

not correctly memorized.”^[1] ‘Urwah ibn Az-Zubair ؓ said, “The people we have found who say that they know who is beyond ‘Adnaan, are only guessing.”^[2]

Ibn Al-Qayyim mentioned the Prophet’s lineage until ‘Adnaan and then said, “(The Prophet’s) lineage until here is known to be correct and is agreed upon by genealogists, so there is no disagreement whatsoever. As for what is beyond ‘Adnaan, there is difference of opinion. Yet they (genealogists) unanimously agree that ‘Adnaan is from the direct line of Ismaa’eel ؑ.”^[3] And Ibn Sa’d wrote in his *Tabaqaat*: “We refrain (from claiming any knowledge about the lineage of the Prophet ﷺ) between ‘Adnaan and Ismaa’eel ؑ.” Adh-Dhahabee said, “Adnaan is from the children (i.e., from the direct line) of Ismaa’eel ibn Ibraaheem ؑ, and this is unanimously agreed upon by the people (i.e., by historians and genealogists), but they differ about those grandfathers (of the Prophet ﷺ) that are between ‘Adnaan and Ismaa’eel ؑ.”^[4]

Men with noble lineages have throughout history been accorded with special honour. Generally speaking, a person with noble lineage is not denied the right to lead and to have authority, but people question the right of a person of low lineage to be a leader – a king, a president, an emperor, etc. Since the Prophet ﷺ was being prepared for Prophethood, Allah ﷻ blessed him with a noble lineage, thus making it easier for people to accept and follow him.

The Prophet ﷺ indeed possesses a most wonderful lineage. He ﷺ is from the direct line of both Ismaa’eel ؑ and Ibraaheem ؑ. Furthermore, he ﷺ is the answer to Ibraaheem’s supplication; he ﷺ said about himself, “I am the supplication of my father Ibraaheem (i.e., the answer to his supplication), and the glad

^[1] *Sharhus-Sunnah* (13/193)

^[2] *Ibn Sa’d* (1/58)

^[3] *Zaad Al-Ma’ad* (1/71)

^[4] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Adh-Dhahabee (pg 1)

tidings of my brother 'Eesa (Jesus).''^[1] It is most often the case that people who are blessed with noble lineages aspire for higher goals and aims, and turn away from base desires; and of course, this was especially true of Prophets ﷺ and Messengers ﷺ.

The first narration mentioned in this section, as well as other similar narrations, points to the fact that Allah ﷻ favoured Arabs above all other peoples, and the Quraish in particular above all other tribes. If one loves the Prophet ﷺ, then one should, by extension, love the people to whom he was sent and the tribe among whom he was born. That love should be felt not because of their race, but because of a simple reality: Every *Qurashee* (a member of the Quraish) Arab was blessed by being related to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. This does not mean that we should love all individuals among the Quraish, nor does it run contrary to the reality that many members of the Quraish and many Arabs disbelieved in Islam. For as soon as one of them deviated from the truth and disbelieved in Allah ﷻ, the true relation between him and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ became destroyed and any blood relation between them was taken out of consideration – and the same of course applies to present-day Arabs and descendants of the Quraish.

'Abdullah Ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib's Marriage To Aaminah Bint Wahb, And Aaminah's Dream

'Abdullah was one of 'Abdul-Muttalib's most beloved sons. 'Abdullah was about to be slaughtered at one point during his youth (the history of which is not mentioned in this work), but he was spared and his father paid 100 camels for his ransom. 'Abdullah got married to Aaminah bint Wahb ibn 'Abd-Manaaf ibn Zuhrah ibn Kilaab, whose lineage was very noble indeed.

Either before the Prophet's birth or shortly afterwards (historical accounts differ in this regard), 'Abdullah died and was buried in Al-Madeenah, alongside his uncles from the Banu 'Adee ibn An-

^[1] *Al-Haakim* (2/600).

Najjaar clan. He had gone to Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions) for a business trip, and death overtook him in Al-Madeenah, during his return journey; but he had already impregnated his wife. And so it was as if it was being said to him: "Your mission in life is complete; as for this pure child you leave behind, Allah will, with His Wisdom and Mercy, take care of him and prepare him for the task of taking mankind out of darkness and bringing them into the light."

The marriage of 'Abdullah to Aaminah was not the beginning of the Prophet's affair. When the Prophet ﷺ was once asked about the beginning of his affair, he ﷺ said, "I am the supplication of my father Ibraaheem (i.e., the answer to his supplication) and the glad tidings of my brother 'Eesa. And my mother saw (in a dream) that light came out of her, light that illuminated the castles of Ash-Sham (Ash-Sham refers to the region of Syria and neighbouring lands)."^[1]

The supplication of Ibraaheem ؑ is related in this Verse of the Qur'an:

﴿رَبَّنَا وَأَبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾ (١٢٩)

"Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own (and indeed Allah answered their invocation by sending Muhammad ﷺ), who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book (this Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah (full knowledge of the Islamic laws and jurisprudence or wisdom or Prophethood, etc.), and sanctify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." (Qur'an 2: 129)

And the glad tidings of 'Eesa ؑ are mentioned in this Verse:

^[1] Ahmad (5/262), Al-Haakim (2/600), and Mujma' Az-Zawaaid (8/222). Imam Ahmad's chain of this narration is *Hasan* (acceptable), and other corroborating narrations strengthen (its grading). Al-Haakim said, "Its chain is authentic, thought neither of them (i.e., Bukhaaree and Muslim) related it (in their *Saheeh* compilations)"; Adh-Dhahabee concurred with his grading of the *Hadeeth*.

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدٌ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٦﴾﴾

"And (remember) when 'Eesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), said: "O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Taurat [(Torah) which came] before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad. But when he (Ahmad, i.e., Muhammad ﷺ) came to them with clear proofs, they said: "This is plain magic." (Qur'an 61: 6)

In the above-mentioned Hadeeth, the Prophet ﷺ said, "And my mother saw (in a dream) that light came out of her, light that illuminated the castles of Ash-Sham (Ash-Sham refers to the region of Syria and neighbouring lands)." Commenting on these words, Ibn Rajab said, "The coming out of this light at the time of his birth is an indication of the light that he ﷺ was to come with, that the people of earth were to be guided by, and that was going to remove the darkness of *Shirk* (polytheism, to associate partners with Allah in worship)." Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانُكَ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٦﴾﴾

"O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Now has come to you Our Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture and passing over (i.e., leaving out without explaining) much. Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) and a plain Book (this Qur'an). Wherewith Allah guides all those who

seek His Good Pleasure to ways of peace, and He brings them out of darkness by His Will unto light and guides them to a Straight Way (Islamic Monotheism)." (Qur'an 5: 15, 16)

Ibn Katheer said, "The specific mention of Ash-Sham as being the place where his light shall appear points to how Islam will have a stable and firm footing in the lands of Ash-Sham. In the end times (i.e., just before the end of this world), Ash-Sham will be a stronghold of Islam and its adherents, and it is there that 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam ﷺ will descend – in Damascus, at the white minaret on its eastern side. It is related both in *Saheeh Bukhaaree* and *Saheeh Muslim* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A group from my nation will continue to remain successful upon the truth; they will not be harmed by those who forsake them, nor by those who oppose them, (they will remain upon that state) until Allah's command comes (i.e., a gentle, good wind that will take the souls of all believers), and they will still be upon that state." In *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the following is included in the narration: "And they are in Ash-Sham."^[1]

The Birth Of The Prophet ﷺ

Scholars agree that the Prophet ﷺ was born on a Monday, and most scholars maintain that he was born after 12 nights had passed from the month of Rabee'ul-Awwal. Furthermore, scholars agree that he was born during the Year of the Elephant. As for the location of his birth, the Prophet ﷺ was born in the house of Abu Taalib, in the mountain pass of Banu Haashim.

His Wet Nurses

The wet nurse of the Prophet ﷺ was Umm Aiman Barakah Al-Habashiyyah, who was the female slave of his father, 'Abdullah. The first woman to breast-feed the Prophet ﷺ was Thuwaibah, the female slave of Abu Lahab. Zainab bint Abu Salamah ﷺ

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (1/184). Bukhaaree related this *Hadeeth* in his *Saheeh*, in "The Book of Virtues." *Hadeeth* numbers: 3640 and 3641. Bukhaaree also related in another book of his *Saheeh*: *Adhering to the Qur'an and Sunnah*. *Hadeeth* number: 7311.

related that Umm Habeebah ؓ informed her that she once said to the Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allah, marry my sister, the daughter of Abu Sufyaan." Surprised that she would want him to have another wife – since that ran contrary to the nature of women – the Prophet ﷺ said, "And would you love for that (to happen)?" She ؓ said, "Yes, I am not alone [as things stand (i.e., as things stand now, I still have to share you with other wives)], but the person I would love most to share with me in goodness is my sister." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, that is not permissible for me," referring to the fact that it is not permissible for a man to be married to two sisters at the same time. She ؓ said, "Verily, we are told that you want to marry the daughter of Abu Salamah." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "The daughter of Umm Salamah?" She said, "Yes." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Had she not been my *Rabeebah* (the daughter of my wife – one that is born from another man) in my household, she would (still) not be lawful to me (so there are two reasons why it was not lawful for him ﷺ to marry her). She is the daughter of my brother through breast-feeding, for Thuwaibah breast-fed both Abu Salamah and me."^[1]

As for Umm Aiman, she was a maid who belonged to 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib, and she was from Abyssinia. When the Prophet ﷺ was born, and after his father had died, Umm Aiman nursed the Prophet ﷺ. Then, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ grew older, he ﷺ freed her and married her off to Zaid ibn Haarithah ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ died first, and then Umm Aiman ؓ died five months later.^[2]

Haleemah As-Sa'diyyah ؓ

Abdullah ibn Ja'far ؓ said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was born, Haleemah bint Al-Haarith came among a group of

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Marriage"; chapter, "And Your Mothers From Breast-feeding." *Hadeeth* number: 5101.

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of *Jihaad*"; chapter, "The *Muhaajiroon* Return Gifts, such as Trees and Fruits, to the *Ansaar*, Once They no Longer Needed Them (i.e., Those Gifts)." *Hadeeth* number: 1771.

women from (the tribe of) Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr, all of whom were looking for infants in Makkah." It was common during those times for women who lived in the city to give up their infants for a while to women who lived in the desert. Those women were wetnurses; they would rear and breastfeed the infants for a number of months or years, depending on the child. The theory behind this practice was that children who were raised in the desert were at a safe distance from the diseases that commonly afflicted city-dwelling people; furthermore, in the desert, a child would grow up independent and strong, both physically and mentally; and he would learn pure, grammatically correct Arabic, and avoid picking up the slang that was often spoken in the city. Haleemah ؓ herself related the rest of the narration:

"I left among the first group of women, riding a female donkey – which was *Qamraa* (a colour that is close to either green or white and that contains some mixture of brownness or dullness in it) – that belonged to me. With me was my husband, Al-Haarith ibn 'Abdul-'Uzzah, one of the children of Sa'd ibn Bakr, who became a part of the Banu Naadirah clan. Our female donkey had become afflicted with bloody wounds (because of the length of the journey). I also brought along an old camel, but by Allah, it would not give forth even a drop of milk. It was a year of drought: people went hungry, to the point that they became very weak and emaciated. Also with me was my son, who, by Allah, did not sleep at night (due to hunger). And I did not even have anything in my hand with which I could distract him. Yet I hoped for rain (and relief). We had sheep, and so we wanted rain. After we arrived in Makkah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was presented to each one of us, and each one of us disliked (taking) him. We said, 'He is an orphan, and it is the father who is kind and generous to the wet nurse. (In the case of this orphan) what can we expect his mother, uncle, or grandfather to do for us?' Each one of my female companions took an infant (except for me). When I found no other child, I returned to him (the Prophet ﷺ) and took him. By Allah, the only reason I took him was that I could find no other infant. I said to my companion (husband), 'By Allah, I will indeed take this

orphan who is from the children of 'Abdul-Muttalib; perhaps Allah will benefit us through him, and I will not return with my female companions without having taken anything.' He said, 'You are correct (in your decision).'

And so I took him, and returned with him to the place where we had made camp. By Allah, during the very same evening that I brought him with me to the campsite, my breasts gave forth milk, so that I was able to quench his thirst, as well as the thirst of his brother (i.e., her son, and his brother from breast-feeding). His father (again, his father from breast-feeding, and not his blood father) stood up beside the old camel we came with, and he touched it. It was full with milk! And so he milked it. He gave me milk, (and I drank) until my thirst became quenched, and then he drank until his thirst became quenched. He then said, 'O Haleemah, you do realize, by Allah, that we have taken a blessed soul. Allah has given us through that soul what we could not have hoped for.' All of us being full, we spent a good and blessed night. Previously, we could not sleep at night with our own child.

Then my companions and I set out for the return journey to our lands. I mounted my *Al-Qamraa* female donkey, and I carried him (the Prophet ﷺ) with me. By the One Who has the soul of Haleemah in His Hand, I raced past the rest of the caravan; the women exclaimed, 'Hold on for us! Is this the female donkey that you set out with (at the beginning of our journey)?' I said, 'Yes.' They said, 'But it had bloody wounds (on its legs) when we arrived, so what happened to it (to cause this change)?' I said, 'By Allah, I am carrying upon it a blessed boy.'

So we continued our journey, and with the passing of every day Allah ﷻ increased us in goodness. When we arrived (home), the lands were afflicted with drought. Our flocks would go out for grazing, and would then return. The sheep of (the) Banu Sa'd (tribe) returned hungry; meanwhile, my sheep returned with their stomachs full and with plenty of milk in them. We would milk (our sheep) and (then) drink. They (the rest of the tribe) would

say, 'What is it with the sheep of Al-Haarith ibn 'Abdul-'Uzzah, and the sheep of Haleemah: they come back full and with plenty of milk in them. Woe upon you (they would say to one another)! Go out to pasture where the sheep of their flock go out to pasture." They would do so, but as would happen before, their flocks would return hungry; meanwhile, my flock would also return as before (full and with plentiful milk).

And the way in which the Prophet ﷺ grew was very different from the way in which all other children grow: "He grew in a single day the normal growth of an entire year. When he was fully two years old, both his father (i.e., his father from breast-feeding) and I took him to Makkah. We said, 'By Allah, as long as we are able to keep him, we will never part from him.' When we met with his mother, we said, 'By Allah, we have never seen a boy who is more blessed than he is, and we fear upon him the plague and diseases that are rampant in Makkah (Aaminah herself was sick at the time), so let us take him back with us, at least until you are cured from your sickness.' We continued to persist until she finally gave her permission. We took him back with us and stayed (in our homeland) for 3 or 4 months. While he and his brother (i.e., her son, and his brother from breast-feeding) were playing behind the houses (in the area) among a group of small goats and sheep that belonged to us, his brother suddenly (left him and) came racing back to us, and said, 'Verily, (something has happened to) my brother from the Quraish! Two men, both wearing white garments, came to him, took him, and made him lie down. Then, they split open his stomach.'

His father and I went racing outside, and when we reached him, we found him to be standing up; the colour of his face had completely changed. When he saw us, he raced towards us, crying. Both his father and I embraced him, and tightly held him close to us. (One of us said,) 'What is the matter with you, may my mother and father be sacrificed for you?' He said, 'Two men came to me and made me lie down; they split open my stomach, put something with (or in) it, and then returned it as it was before.'

His father said, 'By Allah, I am sure that my son has become afflicted (with madness or something similar); let us return to his family, and give him back to them, before something we really fear happens to him.' And so we took him back to his mother, who, upon seeing us, reproached us for what we were doing and said, 'What made you bring him back before I asked you to do so? Before, you were indeed bent upon restraining him among yourselves.' We said, 'Nothing is the matter. Allah has decreed an end to his breast-feeding, and we are happy with what we see (in terms of his health, etc.).' She said, 'Something has happened with you, so tell me about it?' She did not leave us alone until we told her what had happened. She then said, 'No! By Allah, Allah would not do that with him. Indeed, my son has a great purpose ahead of him. Shall I not inform you about him? I carried him (in my womb), and by Allah, I never carried a load that was lighter and easier upon me than he was. Then, when I carried him, I was made to see light come out of me, light that illuminated the necks of camels in Basra (or she said, 'illuminated the castles of Basra'). Then I delivered him and by Allah, he did not come out as other children do; he came out, supporting himself with his hands on the ground; and his head was raised towards the sky.' She took him, and we departed."^[1]

Lessons and Benefits from This Story

- 1) The student of *Seerah* sees signs and manifestations of the Prophet's blessedness throughout his life; during the Prophet's infancy, Haleemah ؓ greatly benefited from his blessedness. Once she took the Prophet ؑ into her life, she began to produce a great deal of milk, though previously her

¹ Abu Ya'laa, in *Mujma' Az-Zawaa'id* (8/221), and *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*, with the Explanation of Al-Khushanee (1/214), by way of Ibn Ishaaq. In the narration of *As-Seerah*, Ibn Ishaaq explicitly said that he heard the narration (from another narrator). Commenting on this *Hadeeth*, Adh-Dhahabee said in *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 8), "This *Hadeeth* has a good chain, and there are corroborating narrations that strengthen (its grading); therefore, based on those corroborating narrations, the *Hadeeth* is *Hasan* (acceptable)."

breasts did not have enough milk in them for even a single child – her son. Haleemah's child would cry a lot, thus preventing his mother from sleeping at night, a situation that changed after Haleemah ﷺ took custody of the Prophet ﷺ. Having plentiful milk to drink, both son and mother began to spend comfortable and relaxed nights. The Prophet's blessedness also became manifested in the sheep that belonged to Haleemah ﷺ and Haarith ﷺ, for they began to flow with plentiful milk, though previously their udders would remain dry and empty.

- 2) What Allah ﷻ chooses for his obedient slaves is best for them. Allah ﷻ chose an orphan for Haleemah ﷺ, though she did not want to take the infant, and did so in the end only because she could find no other. And, of course, Allah's choice was supremely best for her. On the very day she took the Prophet ﷺ with her, she experienced the positive results of that choice. In this there is a lesson for every Muslim: Not knowing what is in one's best interest in the long run, one should be content in his heart with what Allah ﷻ decrees for him; and one should not regret what passes one by in this world; or in other words, one should not regret missing out on what Allah ﷻ did not decree for one to have.
- 3) To maintain the natural purity that a child is born upon, to promote correct development of both mind and body, city-dwelling Arabs would send their children to be raised, in the first few critical years of their life, in the desert. Commenting on this practice, Shaikh Muhammad Al-Ghazaalee – may Allah have mercy on him – said, "It is a wretched thing indeed that our children live in constricted apartments, within closely attached and crowded buildings – as if each building contains boxes to confine and enclose those that are within them. Such a life prevents them from experiencing the wonderful joy of breathing good and fresh air. To be sure, the nervousness and stress that have accompanied the development of modern civilizations have partly to do with people being far away from

natural settings, and being immersed in artificiality. We should certainly admire the attitude that the people of Makkah took towards the desert, in terms of making its spacious land the first playground of their children. Many specialists in education feel that a natural environment should be the first classroom setting for infants, so that their perceptions of the world become in harmony with the realities of the universe in which they live. It appears, however, that (given our present-day circumstances and mind-sets) achieving that would be most difficult indeed."

In the desert land of the Banu Sa'd tribe, the Prophet ﷺ learned fluent, pure Arabic; later on in his life, he ﷺ became the most eloquent speaker of the language. Once, Abu Bakr ؓ said to him, "O Messenger of Allah, I have not seen anyone who is more eloquent than you are." The Prophet ﷺ replied, "And what would prevent me (from being so), for I am from the Quraish, and I was nursed (and raised) among (the) Banu Sa'd (tribe)."

- 4) The incident of the splitting of the Prophet's chest certainly deserves more than a passing mention or thought. What happened on that day was from the signs of Prophethood, and was a clear proof that Allah ﷻ chose Muhammad ﷺ for a very important mission in life.

Imam Muslim related in his *Saheeh* the story of the Prophet's chest being split open. In Imam Muslim's narration, Anas ibn Maalik ؓ said, "While the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was playing with some other boys, Jibreel ؑ came to him, took him, forced him to the ground, and split him open, revealing his heart. Jibreel extracted his heart, removed from it a blood clot, and said, 'This is the portion of *Shaitaan* (the Devil) in you.' He then washed the heart with *Zamzam* water in a basin made of gold. He then joined the heart together, and returned it to its place. The children hurried off to his mother – i.e., his mother from breast-feeding. They said to her, 'Verily, Muhammad has been killed.' They went to him and found that his colour had changed (though he was otherwise

fine)." Anas ؓ said, "I used to see the marks of that stitching on his chest."^[1]

Without a doubt, purification from *Shaitaan's* influence was more than an early sign of Prophethood; it was also preparation for protecting the Prophet ﷺ from evil and from worshipping other than Allah ﷻ. Only pure Islamic Monotheism was to remain in his heart. The above-mentioned incident served its purpose, for even prior to receiving revelation, the Prophet ﷺ never bowed down to an idol or perpetrated a major sin, even though polytheism and evil deeds were practiced on a widespread scale among the Quraish.

While discussing the incident during which the Prophet's chest was split open, Dr. Al-Bootee pointed out that, "It appears that the wisdom behind it was both to announce the importance of the Prophet ﷺ and to prepare him at a very early age for *Al-'Ismah* (protection from major sins, from making a mistake when conveying the message of Islam, and so on) and revelation. Physical means were employed (for that preparation) to make it easier for people to have faith in him and to believe his message. Therefore, the incident involved spiritual purification, but was manifested in a physical, tangible manner" The removal of the blood clot purified the Prophet ﷺ from the immaturity, foolishness, and recklessness of youth. The incident also shows us the degree to which Allah ﷻ protected the Prophet ﷺ and prevented *Shaitaan* from having any influence over him whatsoever.

The Death Of His Mother, And Then His Living Under The Care Of His Grandfather And Uncle

Aaminah died when the Prophet ﷺ was six years old, and like her husband before her, she died during a journey. She had traveled to see her uncles from the Banu 'Adee ibn Najjaar tribe, and the purpose of her visit was to show them her son. She died on the way back in a place called Al-Abwaa, which is situated somewhere

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Eemaan (faith)"; chapter, "The Night Journey of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to the Heavens." *Hadeeth* number: 162.

between Makkah and Al-Madeenah, and she was buried there as well.

Once she died, it was 'Abdul-Muttalib who became guardian and caretaker of the Prophet ﷺ. 'Abdul-Muttalib loved the Prophet ﷺ a great deal and preferred him to even his own sons – who were the uncles of the Prophet ﷺ. Being in awe of their father, the Prophet's uncles did not dare sit on his carpet; in fact, no one dared to sit with him on his carpet. Yet the Prophet ﷺ would do so, though his uncles would try to make him sit somewhere else. Abdul-Muttalib took the Prophet's side in the matter; in fact, he encouraged the Prophet ﷺ to sit alongside him, seeing goodness in him and sensing that he was going to grow up to do great things. When 'Abdul-Muttalib would send the Prophet ﷺ on an errand, he would perform it and then return in a short while; but one day, 'Abdul-Muttalib sent him to search out for stray camels, and he ﷺ was delayed during the performance of that task. When the Prophet's absence became prolonged, 'Abdul-Muttalib began to worry a great deal, and even felt very sad, for he loved his grandson a great deal. As soon as the Prophet ﷺ returned with the camels, 'Abdul-Muttalib said to him, "O my son, just as a woman does, I have become sad on your account – with sadness (that is so extreme) that (it) will never leave me."^[1]

After two years of his guardianship had passed, 'Abdul-Muttalib was bidding farewell to the world, and, upon learning of his imminent death, ordered that his son, 'Abu Taalib, should be the new guardian of the Prophet ﷺ. So at the age of 8, the Prophet ﷺ yet again had a new guardian, one that loved him as much, or almost as much, as did his previous one.

Allah ﷻ decreed that His Messenger ﷺ should be raised as an orphan. Thus, as a child, the Prophet ﷺ did not have parents who spoiled him or riches that made for a soft and easy upbringing. The Prophet ﷺ faced many calamities even as a child; in addition to not having ever met his father, he first lost his mother and then

^[1] Related by At-Tabaraanee in *Al-Kabeer* (5524). In *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 56), Ibraaheem Al-'Alee ruled that the *Hadeeth* is authentic.

his grandfather. Such hardships helped make him sensitive to the pains of others, for sadness purifies the soul from hardness and arrogance and increases it in softness and humbleness.

His parents died in their twenties not because they were weak in their physical makeup, but rather because Allah ﷻ caused them to die once they had fulfilled the task for which they were created, so that every orphan can find comfort and consolation in the early history of the Prophet ﷺ. For despite being an orphan, the Prophet ﷺ had lofty manners and characteristics. As an orphan, the Prophet ﷺ developed a high level of determination, so that he depended upon no human being in his affairs. That his parents could have no influence on his mission and that no human being could interfere in his training and development are some of the reasons why the Prophet ﷺ was born an orphan. Since it was Allah ﷻ Alone Who took care of the Prophet's training and upbringing, the Prophet ﷺ was not influenced in the least by the beliefs and traditions of pre-Islamic ignorance. Allah ﷻ provided the Prophet ﷺ with the care of his grandfather and uncle to facilitate his material welfare; but as for his spiritual welfare and his moral training, it was Allah ﷻ Who was taking care of him.

Working As A Shepherd

Being of noble lineage does not guarantee financial stability, a fact that Abu Taalib knew all too well. When the Prophet ﷺ was still young, Abu Taalib was going through a financial crisis; he had many mouths to feed, and business wasn't going so well. To help his uncle get through those hard times, the Prophet ﷺ worked as a shepherd. In an authentic *Hadeeth*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Every Prophet that Allah sent herded sheep (at one time or another during his life)." The Companions رضى الله عنهم said, "And even you?" He ﷺ said, "Yes, I herded them upon Qaraareet (Ibn Hajar said that scholars mention two possible meanings of Qaraareet: it is either a place in Makkah, or it is a portion of a dinar or dirham, in which case the Prophet ﷺ was mentioning his wages) for the

people of Makkah.”^[1]

Working as a shepherd allowed the Prophet ﷺ to work in peace and quiet, to enjoy the beauty of the desert, and to contemplate the wonders and beauty of Allah’s creation. Through his work, a shepherd picks up and develops many wonderful qualities, qualities that the Prophet ﷺ needed to lead his nation. Here are some of those qualities:

- 1) Patience: A shepherd is busy taking care of his flock from the rising of the sun until nightfall. Since sheep take so long to graze, a shepherd needs to be very patient in dealing with his flock. Likewise, a leader also has to be patient with his people, albeit for different reasons.

Castle life, comfort, and luxury – a shepherd knows none of these things. All day long, he is outside in very hot weather, and extremely hot weather if he is working in the Arabian Peninsula. He therefore needs plentiful water to quench his constant thirst, and all that he is able to find is coarse food. In short, the shepherd’s life is a hard life, and so he must be very patient in coping with his daily hardships.

- 2) Humbleness: The very nature of a shepherd’s work requires him to be humble. Serving sheep, supervising the delivery of a baby sheep, guarding sheep from predators, and sleeping in close proximity to the flock – these are the day-to-day duties of a shepherd. Being in close contact with his flock throughout the day, a shepherd might sometimes be sprayed with urine or come into contact with dung. But none of this perturbs the shepherd, and so as each day of labor passes, pride and arrogance are driven further away from his heart, and humbleness becomes more and more his defining characteristic. It is related in *Saheeh Muslim* that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “He who has an atom’s weight (or the weight of a small ant) of pride in his heart does not enter

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Book of Hiring Out”; chapter, “Herding Sheep for Qaraareet.” *Hadeeth* number: 2262.

Paradise." A man said, "Verily, a man loves for his clothing to be nice, and for his shoes to be nice (so is that pride?)." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. Pride is denying (and turning away from) the truth, and looking down upon people (deeming oneself to be superior to them)."^[1]

- 3) Bravery: Because of a shepherd's job description, his natural enemies are all predatory animals. To stave off the attacks of wild animals upon his flock, a shepherd certainly has to be very brave.
- 4) Mercy and compassion: Like human beings, sheep are prone to sickness, disease, and accidents. And it is their shepherd who must act as their caretaker and doctor while they are convalescing. If one is merciful to animals – as is a shepherd – then it is more than likely that he will be even more merciful towards other human beings, particularly so if he is a Messenger ﷺ sent by Allah ﷻ to teach mankind, guide them, and save them from the Hellfire.
- 5) The love of earning one's living through lawful work: Indeed, Allah ﷻ most certainly could have provided the Prophet ﷺ with wealth and comfort, so that he would not have had to work as a shepherd. But instead, he was being trained, and his nation was being taught a lesson: The most honourable way to live is to eat from what one earns through lawful work. One who invites others to Islam must especially avoid taking from what is in the hands of others; he must be independent of all human beings. A self-sufficient man is dignified in the eyes of others; whatever good he does, he does for Allah ﷻ. That every Prophet ﷺ worked – as is mentioned in the above-mentioned *Hadeeth* – is one of many proofs that refute the accusation that polytheists leveled against Prophets ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said:

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Faith"; chapter, "The Prohibition of Pride and an Explanation (of this Ruling)." *Hadeeth* number: 91.

﴿قَالُوا أَجِئْنَا لِنُلْفِنَا عَمَّا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَاءَنَا وَتَكُونُ لَكُمَا الْكِبَرِيَاءُ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَمَا نَحْنُ لَكُمَا بِمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ (٧٨)

"They said: "Have you come to us to turn us away from that (faith) we found our fathers following, – and that you two may have greatness in the land? We are not going to believe you two!"
(Qur'an 10: 78)

Fir'aun thought the same about Moosa ؑ. Because love of the world and its pleasures fully dominates their thoughts, motives, and actions, disbelievers think that others are the same, that the purpose behind any movement is the achievement of some worldly end, which is why the Prophets ؑ clarified to their peoples that they wanted no worldly treasures from them:

﴿وَيَقُولُوا لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مَا لَآ إِنِ اجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدٍ
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّهُمْ مُلْقَفُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَلَكِنِّي أَرَأَيْتُمْ قَوْمًا يَجْهَلُونَ﴾ (٧٩)

"And O my people! I ask of you no wealth for it, my reward is from none but Allah. I am not going to drive away those who have believed. Surely, they are going to meet their Lord, but I see that you are a people that are ignorant." (Qur'an 11: 29)

Bukhaaree related from Al-Miqdaam ؓ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "No one has ever eaten better food than that which he eats from what he works at with his hand. And verily, the Prophet of Allah, Daawood ؑ, would eat from the work of his hand."^[1]

When one is self-sufficient, depending upon no one but Allah ﷻ, one gains the freedom of being able to speak the truth. Because they are dependant upon the generosity of others, many people bow their heads low before evildoers, remaining silent about their wrongdoing because they fear losing their jobs and their livelihood.

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, "The Book of Business Transactions"; chapter, "A Man's Earnings, and the Work He Does with his Hand." Hadeeth number: 2072.

All of the above-mentioned characteristics were being developed in the Prophet ﷺ, regardless of whether he realized that that was the case at the time – it is possible he didn't realize the significance of what was happening to him, since he ﷺ didn't know that he ﷺ was soon to be charged with the duties of Prophethood.

The Prophet ﷺ was faithful, caring, and sensitive to the needs of others. His uncle took care of him with all of his energy and soul, showing him the love and compassion of a father. How did the Prophet ﷺ respond to that love? No sooner did he feel in himself the ability to earn money than he went out to work and toil, so that he could contribute to pay for his uncle's household expenses.

We also gain from the Prophet's early employment an idea of the life that Allah ﷻ wants his obedient slaves to lead in this world. It was certainly easy upon Allah ﷻ to provide a comfortable and easy existence for the Prophet ﷺ, so that he would have no pressing reason to work all day in the heat of the desert, serving his flock. But Allah's Wisdom dictated that the Prophet ﷺ – and all Muslims – instead learn an important lesson: the best wealth a person gains is the wealth he earns through hard work, through providing valuable services to society and mankind. And the worst wealth a man receives is the wealth he is given while he is lying down on his back, the wealth he does not work to gain, the wealth that is given to him not as payment for valuable services provided to society and mankind.

How Allah ﷻ Protected The Prophet ﷺ During The Early Years Of His Life

Even during the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, Allah ﷻ protected the Prophet ﷺ from idol worship and from all forms of polytheism. 'Urwah related that Khadeejah's neighbour – during pre-Islamic times – informed him that he once heard the Prophet ﷺ say to Khadeejah ﷺ, "O Khadeejah, by Allah, I will never worship Al-Laah and Al-'Uzzaa."^[1] These were the names

^[1] *Al-Musnad*, *Hadeeth* number: 17947, and its chain is authentic.

of idols that the Quraish would worship. Also, both the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ibn 'Amr ibn Nufail (may Allah have mercy on him) would abstain from eating the meat of animals that were slaughtered by other than the Name of Allah ﷻ.

To be sure, Allah ﷻ protected the Prophet ﷺ from the vile deeds that result from the recklessness of youth; but He ﷻ also protected the Prophet ﷺ from lesser sins as well, since many minor foibles are not compatible with the dignity of one whose mission it is in life to save others from the Hellfire. 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, "I never resolved to do any of bad things that the people of ignorance would resolve to do, except on two occasions in life; and on both occasions, Allah protected me from perpetrating those bad things. One night, I was north of Makkah in the company of a young man from the Quraish; we were with his family's sheep, which he was herding, when I said to him, 'Watch over my sheep, so that I can while away this evening with conversation and entertainment in Makkah, just as other youth while away their evenings with conversation and entertainment.' He said, 'Yes,' and so I set out (for Makkah). When I reached the nearest house from the houses of Makkah, I heard singing, the striking of Dufoof (drum-like instruments), and (the sound of) pipes. I asked, 'What is this?' They (people nearby perhaps) said, 'Such and such man married such and such woman.' It was a man from the Quraish who had married a woman from the Quraish. And so I amused myself with that singing and with those sounds until sleep overcame me (right there where I was), and then the only thing that woke me up was the heat of the sun, and so I returned. He (i.e., the other shepherd) asked, 'What did you do?' I informed him (about what had happened). Then I made a similar request to him on another night, and he agreed. I set out (towards Makkah), and I heard sounds that were similar (to the sounds of the earlier night), and words similar to what was spoken to me (on the earlier night) were spoken to me (again). I amused myself with what I heard, until sleep overcame my eyes. And it was only the touching of the sun that awoke me. Then I returned to my companion, who said,

‘What did you do?’ I said, ‘I didn’t do anything.’ By Allah, after that, I never again resolved to perpetrate the evil that the people of ignorance would perpetrate. I continued upon that (protected state) until Allah ﷻ honoured me by making me His Prophet.”^[1]

This *Hadeeth* clarifies two important realities:

- 1) The Prophet ﷺ possessed the main characteristics that are common to all human beings. He felt the same inward inclinations and desires that all young people feel, and he understood what it meant to while away the hours of the night with conversation and entertainment. He ﷺ knew that evenings spent in such a manner were enjoyable, and within himself his soul was saying to him, “Would that you enjoyed some of the things that other people enjoy.”
- 2) Despite the above-mentioned natural inclinations and desires, Allah ﷻ protected the Prophet ﷺ from all forms of evil and from anything that was not in harmony with the message for which he ﷺ was being prepared.

Buhairah The Monk Meets With The Messenger Of Allah ﷺ

Abu Taalib would often travel to Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions) and elsewhere for business purposes. On one such journey, he took the Prophet ﷺ along with him; also accompanying them were Makkah’s chieftains. When their caravan overlooked the monastery of the monk Buhairah, they made camp and began to unload some of their supplies. Meanwhile, to their surprise, Buhairah was coming out to meet them. What was so surprising was that, though they had frequently stopped beside his monastery on previous business trips, he would never come out to meet them or even pay any attention to them at all.

As they were removing some of their things, Buhairah began to

^[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibraaheem Al-‘Alee (pg. 57).

walk among them, until he reached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, when he stopped, took the Messenger ﷺ by the hand, and exclaimed, "This is the chief of 'Alaameen (i.e., mankind, jinns, etc.). This is the Messenger of the Lord of all that exists. Allah will send him as a (form of) mercy to all that exists." The chieftains of the Quraish said, "And what makes you know this?" He said, "When you overlooked (this place), as you were arriving from 'Aqaba, every single tree and stone (in the area) fell down in prostration, and they do not perform prostration for anyone save a Prophet. And indeed, I know him from the seal of Prophethood that resembles an apple (in shape) and that is located below his shoulder blade."

He returned to his monastery for a while in order to prepare food for them. When he returned with the food, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was busy watching over their camels. Buhairah requested that they call him to join them in their meal. He came to them, and there was a cloud above him giving him shade. When he arrived, he found that everyone else had beaten him to the shade of the tree; nonetheless, when he sat down, the shade moved towards him and covered him. Seeing this, Buhairah said, "Look! The shade of the tree has moved to cover him."

Buhairah told Abu Taalib and the other chieftains that they should return with the Prophet ﷺ to their homeland; he particularly pleaded with them not to take him to the lands of the Romans, for if the Romans were to know about him and were to see the signs of his Prophethood, they would certainly kill him. As he was explaining this to them, he turned around and saw seven Romans approaching. He went to them and asked them what they wanted. They said, "News has reached us that the (awaited) Prophet is coming out during this month. Every road has been blocked with guards, and we were sent to watch over this road." Buhairah said to them, "Suppose Allah wants a matter to be fulfilled; can any person prevent that from happening?" They said, "No." He said, "Then pledge allegiance to him." They then joined the chieftains of the Quraish and did no harm to the

Prophet ﷺ. But by this point, Buhairah was becoming very worried; he had managed to convince these guards to leave the Prophet ﷺ alone, but there was no telling whether more guards were on the way or whether the Prophet ﷺ would be identified at a Roman checkpoint. And so he said to the chieftains of the Quraish, "I insist that you tell me who his guardian is." They said, "Abu Taalib is his guardian." Buhairah then continued to plead with Abu Taalib until the latter finally took his advice to heart and sent the Prophet ﷺ back home to Makkah.^[1]

The story of Buhairah provides us with many insights into the life of the Prophet ﷺ.

First, we learn that not all priests and rabbis distorted their revealed books. There were some among them, albeit very few in number, who were sincere and truthful, and who openly acknowledged that Muhammad ﷺ was indeed a Messenger to all of mankind; they knew this from the signs and descriptions that they found in their revealed books.

Second, by the command of Allah ﷻ, inanimate objects would honour the Prophet ﷺ, a fact that is established in various narrations. Some narrations describe how a particular stone would greet the Prophet ﷺ; one particular narration describes how a tree wept when the Prophet ﷺ stopped delivering sermons beside it; and the above-mentioned narration describes how trees and stones performed prostration to the Prophet ﷺ as a way of honouring him.

Third, as precocious as he was by inherent nature, the Prophet ﷺ also benefited from accompanying his uncle on business trips, particularly when Quraish's chieftains also accompanied them. During such journeys, the Prophet ﷺ benefited from the experiences and knowledge of wise men from both the Quraish and foreign tribes.

Fourth, Buhairah knew that if the Romans found out about the Prophet ﷺ, they would kill him. This was significant because, at

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pgs. 58, 59).

the time, the Roman Empire extended into the lands of the Arabs, particularly Ash-Sham (Syria and surroundings regions). And so the Romans knew that the awaited Messenger, who was to come from the Arabs, would bring an end to their imperial control over the region. Since the Prophet ﷺ was a threat to the interests of their empire, Romans both feared him and ardently desired to first find him and then kill him.

The Fijaar War

The *Fijaar* war pitted the Quraish, along with their allies from the Kinaanah tribe, against the Hawaazin tribe. Like most Arab wars that were fought during the pre Islamic days of ignorance, the Fijaar War began with a trifling dispute and escalated into an all out war. A man named Urwah Ar-Rahhaal ibn 'Utbah ibn Hawaazin granted his protection to No'maan ibn Al-Mundhir and his trading caravan, which was travelling to the marketplace of Ukaadh. Al-Barraadh ibn Qais ibn Kinaanah said to Urwah, "Will you protect him against the Kinaanah tribe?" Urwah said, "Yes, and for that matter, I will protect him against all of mankind." When Urwah set out with No'maan and his trading caravan, Al-Barraadh followed close behind, waiting for an opportune moment to ambush Urwah and kill him by surprise. Al-Barraadh's tribe, the Kinaanah, found out about what was happening, and so they too followed in close pursuit, hoping to take their stronger adversaries from the Hawaazin tribe by surprise. When Urwah and the Hawaazin found out that they were being followed, they turned around and headed towards the Kinaanah tribe, now becoming the hunters instead of the hunted. They overtook the Kinaanah tribe before they were able to enter the inviolable city of Makkah, and the two tribes fought until nightfall, at which time the members of the Kinaanah tribe were able to enter Makkah. Since Arabs considered Makkah to be holy, the Hawaazin tribe did not pursue their enemy. But on the following day, the fighting began anew, except that this time around, the Quraish entered into the fray, lending their support to

the Kinaanah tribe. In the battles that ensued, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ participated alongside the Quraish, albeit playing a very minor role. The word *Fijaar* means wickedness. The reason why the war was given this name is that the inviolability of Makkah was being defiled, and Arabs considered any defilement of Makkah's sanctity to be a wicked and heinous crime. When he mentioned the war later on his life, the Prophet said, "I used to hand arrows to my uncles." What this means is that the Prophet ﷺ would pick up stray arrows fired by the enemies and hand them to his uncles.^[1] At the time, the Prophet ﷺ was either fourteen or fifteen years old; however, it has been said that he was twenty years old. That the Prophet ﷺ only handed arrows to his uncles without fighting strengthens the former view – that he was fourteen or fifteen years old. For had he ﷺ been twenty years old, he ﷺ probably would have been required to fully participate in the battle, and not play the minor, secondary role that he had in fact played.

The Fudool Alliance

The *Fudool* Alliance was formed after the Quraish returned from the *Fijaar* War. It began when a man from Zubaid – a region in Yemen – went to Makkah with some merchandise. Al-'Aas ibn Waail purchased the merchandise from him, took possession of the merchandise, but refused to pay for it. The man from Zubaid pleaded with Quraish's chieftains to help him, but they refused, simply because, like them, Al-'Aas was a nobleman and a chieftain and was therefore not to be opposed. The Zubaidi man didn't give up hope; instead, he stood beside the Kaaba and called out, asking for help from the descendants of Faihr (the Quraish) and reproaching them for their refusal to help him against the man who had wronged him. Zubair ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib, one of the Prophet's uncles, stood up and exclaimed, "Will no one help him!" As a result of Zubair's display of anger, a meeting was

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/221-224), and *As-Seerah Al-Halabiyyah* (1/127-129)

convened at the house of Abdullah ibn Jud'aan; present at the meeting were the clans of Banu Haashim, Zuhrah, and Banu Taim ibn Murrah. The meeting occurred in Dhul-Qai'dah, one of the four inviolable months, and those who were present pledged and swore by Allah that they would be as one hand in their support of any victim against his wrongdoer. They then went together to Al-'Aas ibn Waail, seized from him the merchandise he had wrongfully taken, and returned it to its rightful owner. The Quraish referred to what happened in the house of Ibn Jud'aan as the *Fudool* Alliance. *Fudool* was an appropriate name for the alliance since *Fudool* comes from the word *Fadl*, which means nobility, superiority, and virtue. The Prophet ﷺ, who was present at the above-mentioned meeting, said later on in his life, "When I was a boy, I attended the *Al-Muteebeen* Alliance (i.e., the *Fudool* Alliance) with my uncles. I would not love to have even red camels as a recompense for me breaking (the terms) of that alliance."^[1] The owner of red camels during those times would today be equivalent to a millionaire. The Prophet ﷺ said in another *Hadeeth*, "I was present in the house of Abdullah ibn Jud'aan when an alliance (i.e., the *Fudool* Alliance) was formed, and I would not love to have in place of that alliance red camels. And if I were invited by it in Islam, I would answer it."^[2]

Morals and Lessons

- 1) The Messenger of Allah ﷺ felt honoured for being able to participate in an alliance that was formed on the basis of establishing justice, which shows that justice has an absolute and not a relative value; or in other words, no matter who it is that is carrying out justice, the act itself deserves to be praised.
- 2) The *Fudool* Alliance was like an oasis within the darkness of pre-Islamic ignorance. That the *Fudool* alliance was formed

^[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibraaheem Al-'Alee (pg. 59), and *Al-Albaanee*, may Allah have mercy on him, ruled it to be authentic.

^[2] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/134), and *Fiqh-us-Seerah* by Al-Ghadbaan (pg 102).

proves that, just because evil pervades a given society, it does not mean that that society is completely void of virtuous acts and deeds. Makkan society was an ignorant society; within it, all of the following evils were rampant: the worship of idols, base manners, wrongdoing, fornication, and usury. Nonetheless, within the ranks of Makkan society were some men of noble breeding and character, men who despised evil and wrongdoing. This reality should provide an important lesson for *Du'aat* (callers to Islam) who live in societies wherein Islam is not applied or is being fought against.

- 3) No matter what form it takes, wrongdoing is unacceptable. It doesn't matter whether the person being wronged is a Muslim or a non-Muslim, a pious man or a sinner, a rich man or a poor man; whoever he is, others in society must come to his help.
- 4) It is permissible to form an alliance with non-Muslims if justice is being served in the process; in fact, doing so is a part of enjoining good and forbidding evil. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهَرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا
الْمَلَاجِدَ وَلَا ءَامِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامَ يَنْفَعُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ
فَأَصْطَادُوا وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن
تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Violate not the sanctity of the Symbols of Allah, nor of the Sacred Month, nor of the animals brought for the sacrifice, nor the garlanded people of animals, etc. [Marked by the garlands on their necks made from the outer part of the tree-stems (of Makkah) for their security], nor the people coming to the Sacred House (Makkah), seeking the Bounty and good pleasure of their Lord. But when you finish the Ihram (of Hajj or ‘Umrah), you may hunt, and let not the hatred of some people in (once) stopping you from Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah) lead you to

transgression (and hostility on your part). Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment." (Qur'an 5: 2)

- 5) It is permissible for Muslims to form alliances that are similar in intent and content to the *Fudool* Alliance because they establish a goal that is recognized by and encouraged in the *Shariah*; however, in doing so, Muslims must take into consideration what is best for Islam and for Muslims in the short term and in the long run. The Prophet ﷺ said, "And were I to be invited by it in Islam, I would answer it," which means that even after the advent of Islam, the Prophet ﷺ was prepared to participate in the *Fudool* Alliance or one that had similar aims and objectives.
- 6) A Muslim must strive to have a positive effect on society, to be a person who is remembered for the positive influence he has on the events that take place during his lifetime. Even prior to receiving revelation for the first time, the Prophet ﷺ was known for his many positive contributions to society, to the degree that everyone in the Quraish called him by the name, 'Al Ameen' - "The Trustworthy One." People's hearts were attracted to him when he was still at a very young age, and that attraction, in addition to love, continued to grow throughout his entire life, but especially during the years of his Prophethood.

6

The Prophet's ﷺ Marriage To Khadeejah ؓ, And Some Important Events That Took Place Prior To Prophethood

The Prophet's Marriage To Khadeejah ؓ

Both her previous husbands having died, Khadeejah bint Khuwailid ؓ was a widow. She was known for her noble character, and the people of the Quraish would call her, "The Pure and Chaste One." She ؓ was also very wealthy; she would engage men to do business on her behalf. After she heard about the truthfulness and trustworthiness of Muhammad ﷺ, she proposed that he do business for her in Ash-Sham, promising to give him more than she gave to any other man who did business for her. He ﷺ agreed and left Makkah in the company of Maisarah, Khadijah's servant. When Muhammad ﷺ reached Ash-Sham, he sold the merchandise he had with him, and with the proceeds purchased other merchandise. When all was said and done, he had made a lot of profit for Khadeejah ؓ; and she felt that her wealth was blessed then more so than ever before.

Other than the commission he earned, the Prophet ﷺ benefited greatly from the journey. Since he was headed northwards, he passed by Al-Madeenah, the city to which he would later migrate and make the stronghold of his nation. He also passed by many lands throughout which Islam was soon to spread; therefore, the

knowledge he gained from the journey was certainly of some value to him later on in his life. Also, his trip led to his marriage to Khadijah ؓ. Throughout the trip, Maisarah witnessed the wonderful character, nobility, and truthfulness of the Prophet ﷺ; in addition to that, Khadijah ؓ experienced hitherto unparalleled blessings in her wealth. Based upon these reasons, she had a heart to heart discussion with her close friend Nafeesah bint Munabbah, telling her about the positive feelings she was having about the Prophet ﷺ. Nafeesah went to the Prophet ﷺ and proposed to him on behalf of Khadeejah ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ was pleased with the proposal, but he nonetheless first went to his uncles to seek their advice; they all agreed that he should marry her. And why shouldn't he marry her, for she was the noblest woman among the Quraish; after her last husband had died, almost every Makkan chieftain proposed to her, and she refused them all. And so shortly thereafter the Messenger of Allah ﷺ married her. She ؓ was the first woman that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ married, and he didn't marry any other woman until she died. She gave birth to two of the Prophet's sons and four daughters. The two sons were Al-Qaasim and 'Abdullah – the latter of the two was also known by the names of At-Taahir and At-Tayyibb.

Around the age that he was able to mount a riding animal, Al-Qasim died. As for Abdullah, he died as a child, prior to the beginning of his father's Prophethood. The Prophet's daughters were Zainab ؓ, Ruqayyah ؓ, Umm Khultoom ؓ, and Fatimah ؓ. They all embraced Islam, married, and migrated to Al-Madeenah. When the Prophet ﷺ married Khadeejah ؓ, he was twenty-five years old and she was forty.

Morals and Lessons

- 1) Trustworthiness and truthfulness are the two most important qualities of a successful businessman. They were the very two qualities that prompted Khadeejah ؓ to ask the Prophet ﷺ to do business on her behalf. Consequently, Allah ﷻ opened many doors of goodness for her.

- 2) Business was one of the means through which Allah ﷻ provided sustenance for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prior to his Prophethood. Later on his life, the Prophet ﷺ said that, if a Muslim businessman is both trustworthy and truthful, then he will be resurrected among the Prophets, the truthful ones, and the martyrs. Business is an ideal occupation for a Muslim, for a businessman is not a slave to others; he does not always have to succumb to the whims and desires of an employer. And it is not he who needs people, but it is people who need him.
- 3) Allah ﷻ decreed for the Prophet ﷺ to marry the ideal wife, Khadeejah ؓ, a wife that was both a suitable companion and a trusted counselor and helper. Khadeejah ؓ helped the Prophet ﷺ during difficult times, and participated alongside him in spreading the message of Islam.

One who invites others to the teachings of Islam is especially in need of a pious and good wife. Outside of the home, his days are filled with struggle, and he faces constant opposition from the enemies of Islam. He therefore is in dire need, within the home, of a partner who will comfort him and provide him with the strength and encouragement he needs to fulfill his religious duties.

- 4) The Prophet ﷺ tasted the bitterness of losing his sons, just as previously in life, he ﷺ tasted the bitterness of losing his parents. It was from the wisdom of Allah ﷻ that none of his sons lived past their childhood. With the death of the Prophet's sons, no one could then be tempted because of them, in terms of loving them to an extreme level and claiming Prophethood for them. Furthermore, the early deaths of the Prophet's children should serve as a comfort for those who aren't blessed with sons, and for those who are blessed with sons but lose them at a very early age.

The death of the Prophet's children was a form of tribulation, and as the Prophet ﷺ made it clear, no one is tested more severely than the Prophets ؑ. It was as if Allah ﷻ wanted for

sadness and sensitivity to be part of the Prophet's existence, for men who become leaders of nations turn to tyranny when their hearts are made hard through a selfish and comfortable lifestyle. As for a leader who has experienced hardships and tests in life, and endures them with patience and forbearance, he is likely to then show compassion and sympathy to others who are afflicted with hardships.

- 5) The story of the Prophet's marriage to Khadeejah ؓ should make it clear to a Muslim that the Prophet ﷺ was not concerned with achieving the maximum level of physical pleasures that men commonly strive for. Had he ﷺ been preoccupied with that, he ﷺ would have, as other young men do, sought the hand of a woman who was younger than Khadeejah ؓ or at least one who was not older than him. In choosing Khadeejah ؓ as a wife, the Prophet ﷺ showed that he ﷺ was primarily concerned with her nobility and character; after all, she was known in pre-Islamic days as "The Pure and Chaste One."
- 6) The Prophet's married life with Khadeejah ؓ refutes the claims of those of Islam's enemies who think that the topic of the Prophet's marriages provides them with a lethal weapon with which they can attack Islam. When they talk about the Prophet ﷺ, they paint the picture of a man who was obsessed with satisfying his lusts and desires. But in reality, nothing was further from the truth. Up until the age of 25, the Prophet ﷺ lived a chaste life not within the confines of a puritan society, but within a society that was replete with evil and ignorance, a society wherein one was free to have romantic and sexual encounters with as many women as one desired. Then when the Prophet ﷺ did decide to marry, he ﷺ married a woman who was almost twice his age. During the next 15 years of his life, there was no *Shariah* or set of laws to forbid him from engaging in extra-marital affairs, as did other members of the Quraish, yet he ﷺ remained faithful to Khadeejah ؓ, without even looking at any other woman, though there were many other women that were available.

The Prophet ﷺ remained married to Khadeejah ؓ until she died at the age of 65, at a time when the Prophet ﷺ was himself approaching old age. It is between the ages of 20 and 50 that a man has especially strong desires for women other than his wife; and even though the opportunities to marry other women were available to the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ remained monogamous throughout that entire period.

As for the Prophet ﷺ marrying 'Aishah ؓ later on, as well as his other wives, each marriage had a story, a reason, and a wisdom behind it. The story behind each marriage highlights the wisdom and wonderful character of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Important Role That The Prophet ﷺ Played In The Rebuilding Of The Ka'bah

When the Prophet ﷺ was 35 years old, which was about five years before he ﷺ received revelation for the first time, Quraish's chieftains gathered to discuss an important matter: the rebuilding of the Ka'bah. Due to flood waters and other causes, the walls of the Ka'bah began to split; the damage was so severe that the Quraish feared that the edifice of the Ka'bah would simply collapse at any time.

The Ka'bah was still upon the construction of Ibraaheem ؑ; it was slightly higher than the height of the average man, and it consisted of stones stacked up one on top of another, without any clay to hold them together. What the Quraish wanted to do was not a simple renovation; rather, they wanted to first destroy the edifice of the Ka'bah and then rebuild it with a roof. But they were afraid, feeling that doing so might be a form of sacrilege that would lead to evil repercussions. Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, chief of the Makhzoom clan, said to the others, "I will begin with its destruction." He picked up an axe, stood beside the Ka'bah, and said, "O Allah, we have not gone astray, and we want only that which is good."

In the end, they decided to begin by demolishing only a part of the

Ka'bah, and then to wait one night. If, during the night, they saw an evil portent, they would stop destroying the Ka'bah and fix the part they had already destroyed. But if, during the night, they saw no warning sign, they would continue with the demolition and reconstruction of the Ka'bah. Since nothing untoward happened that night, they did the latter.

Each subtribe was assigned the task of working on one side of the Ka'bah. And though the work involved physical labor that was normally performed by the lower classes, the chieftains and noblemen participated as well, since the work was considered sacred in nature. And so Makkan chieftains would pick up stones and raise them up onto the new structure of the Ka'bah.

The Prophet ﷺ and his uncle Al-'Abbaas ؓ also participated in the reconstruction work. There is a famous account of how, as they were carrying stones, Al-'Abbaas ؓ said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Place your loincloth over your neck, so as to protect yourself from the stones." The Prophet ﷺ fell to the ground, and his eyes were fixed on the sky. Later on, he ﷺ woke up and began to shout, "My loincloth, my loincloth!" He then immediately tied his loincloth around himself again.^[1]

When the reconstruction project was almost completed, a heated argument broke out. The only step that remained in the reconstruction was to place the Black Stone in its place; the problem was that every chieftain wanted the honour of picking up the Black Stone and placing it in the corner of the Ka'bah. This might seem like a trifling argument to some people today, but we must keep in mind that Arabs fought long and hard wars over the concept of honour. Even concerning the case in question, the various subtribes of the Quraish were on the verge of fighting one another. But that eventuality was averted when Makkah's oldest chieftain, Umayyah ibn Al-Mugheerah, said, "O people of Quraish, concerning that over which you

[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Hajj", chapter, "The Superiority of Makkah"
Hadeeth number 1582

differ, appoint the first person to enter the door of the *Masjid* to act as judge over you.” After they agreed to follow Umayyah’s suggestion, they all anxiously waited to see who it was that was going to enter the door. To their mutual satisfaction, it was Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah ﷺ; and upon seeing him, they all exclaimed, “Here is the Trustworthy One. We are indeed pleased.” After they told him about their dispute, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Bring me a robe.” When they brought one to him, he ﷺ placed the Black Stone in its middle with his hands and said, “Let each tribe (i.e., subtribe) hold one corner of the robe.” So the leader of each subtribe held one corner of the robe; then, together, they raised it and carried it to its place, at which point the Prophet ﷺ removed it from the robe and put it in its proper place. Everyone was satisfied, and war was averted.

The reconstruction effort was a success. The Ka’bah was now 18 arm-spans high, and six wooden columns were used to hold up the roof. The door of the Ka’bah was elevated slightly above ground level; stairs were constructed between the ground and the door to permit entry. They placed the door above ground level for two main reasons: First, to prevent easy access into the Ka’bah, for only certain people were allowed to go inside; and second, to prevent water from leaking through the door and entering the Ka’bah.

There was just one goal that the Quraish did not achieve. They didn’t build the Ka’bah completely over the foundations of Ismaa’eel ؑ, for they left out Al-Hijr, which is the northern part of the Ka’bah. Instead of including Al-Hijr as a part of the Ka’bah, they constructed a short wall around it to let people know that it was part of the Ka’bah. They simply had no choice, for when they previously decided to reconstruct the Ka’bah, they had agreed to use only licit money – meaning money that was not derived through unlawful means, such as usury, theft, or unlawful dowry money. And they soon ran out of licit money, leaving them with insufficient funds to include the Al-Hijr area into the actual construction of the Ka’bah.

Morals and Lessons

- 1) What we know for sure is that, throughout time, the Ka'bah has been built and rebuilt for at least a total of four times. Ibraaheem ؑ, with the help of his son Ismaa'eel ؑ, built the original structure. It remained as it was until the Quraish rebuilt it, with the participation of the Prophet ﷺ. The next reconstruction took place during the rule of Yazeed ibn Mu'aawiyah. What happened was that Al-Husain As-Sakkoonee besieged Ibn Az-Zubair ؓ in Makkah, and the siege continued until the latter surrendered himself; nonetheless, fighting took place, and the Ka'bah was set on fire. And so Ibn Az-Zubair ؓ rebuilt the Ka'bah. It was then rebuilt for a last time after Ibn Az-Zubair ؓ was killed, which occurred during the rule of 'Abdul-Malik ibn Marwaan. The reason for the reconstruction was simple: 'Abdul-Malik wanted to return the Ka'bah to the way it was during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, since Ibn Az-Zubair ؓ, when he rebuilt it, changed the shape and size of the edifice – albeit for a very good reason. Ibn Az-Zubair ؓ raised the structure of the Ka'bah by ten arm-spans; he ؓ added two doors to it, one as an entrance, and one as an exit; and, moreover, he ؓ included Al-Hijr, the six arm-spans of the Ka'bah that had been left out during the reconstruction project of the Quraish. Ibn Az-Zubair ؓ made the changes he did based on a *Hadeeth* of 'Aishah ؓ, in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "O 'Aishah, had not your people been from (the people of) ignorance so recently (i.e., it was only a short while ago that they were polytheists), I would have ordered for the House (i.e., the Ka'bah) to be destroyed (to make way for reconstruction), and I would have included into it what was previously excluded from it (i.e., Al-Hijr). I would have fixed it to the ground, made for it an eastern door and a western door, and made it reach the foundation of Ibraaheem."^[1] 'Abdul-Malik was not happy with the changes, which is why he

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Hajj." *Hadeeth* number: 1586.

leveled the Ka'bah and rebuilt it, so that it would be similar to how it was during the Prophet's lifetime. It is said that he later regretted his decision. And Allah ﷻ knows best. Other than the four construction projects mentioned above, certain narrations indicate that the Ka'bah was built or rebuilt at other times as well; for example, one narration indicates that the Angels were the first to build the Ka'bah, and another indicates that Adam ﷺ built the Ka'bah; however, the authenticity of such narrations is a matter of dispute among scholars.

- 2) The way in which the Prophet ﷺ brought an end to the dispute was both wise and just; everyone was pleased, and the shedding of blood was avoided. What was so wonderful about the Prophet's solution was that he ﷺ was able to satisfy the members of all subtribes; this was an example of how Allah ﷻ guided the Prophet ﷺ to make wise and correct decisions even before the period of Prophethood. Allah ﷻ decreed for the Prophet ﷺ to enter the As-Safaa door, in order to resolve the difficult crisis that was brewing. And everyone was pleased when they saw him because they knew that the Prophet ﷺ was trustworthy and that he would judge justly between them without taking sides.
- 3) The events that took place during Quraish's rebuilding of the Ka'bah underscore two important points: First, the Prophet's high status and ranking among the Quraish. And second, Quraish's self-contradictory attitude after the Prophet ﷺ declared his Prophethood, for they were calling him a liar, when only a few years earlier they had all declared that he was the "Truthful, Trustworthy One."
- 4) The Prophet ﷺ gained two important honours during the rebuilding of the Ka'bah: First, the honour of preventing bloodshed between Quraish's subtribes. And second, he ﷺ had the honour of doing what the Quraish were competing for, namely, the honour of placing the Black Stone in its place; Allah ﷻ decreed, through the sequence of events that took

place, that the Prophet ﷺ would be the one who placed the Black Stone in its place. After the chieftains of the Quraish carried it to the Ka'bah, the Prophet ﷺ picked it up from the robe and put it in the corner of the Ka'bah where it belonged.

- 5) The Prophet's solution to Quraish's problem was characteristic of his entire life, for throughout his life, Allah ﷻ guided him to choosing the best and most practical solution to every problem he ﷺ faced.
- 6) There are many examples of how Allah ﷻ protected the Prophet ﷺ from polytheism and evil deeds during the pre-Islamic period of ignorance. One such example occurred during the rebuilding of the Ka'bah, when the Prophet ﷺ was carrying stones. Al-'Abbaas ؓ told the Prophet ﷺ to raise his loincloth in order to protect himself from the stones he was carrying; consequently, the Prophet ﷺ fell down to the ground. His eyes remained fixed on the sky, and then he ﷺ woke up and shouted, "My loincloth, my loincloth." After this incident occurred, the Prophet ﷺ was never again seen naked.^[1]

How People Were Being Prepared To Accept The Prophethood Of Muhammad ﷺ

It was from the wisdom of Allah ﷻ that people were being prepared for the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ in various ways, some of which are as follows:

- 1) Previous Prophets ؑ gave their people glad tidings of the coming of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Ibraaheem ؑ invoked Allah ﷻ to send a Messenger from among the Arabs. Allah ﷻ answered his supplication by sending Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said:

^{1]} *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Hajj"; chapter, "The Superiority of Makkah" *Hadeeth* number: 1582. Also refer to the commentary of the *Hadeeth* in *Fathul-Baaree*.

﴿رَبَّنَا وَأَبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾ (١٢٩)

“Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own (and indeed Allah answered their invocation by sending Muhammad ﷺ), who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book (this Qur’an) and Al-Hikmah (full knowledge of the Islamic laws and jurisprudence or wisdom or Prophethood, etc.), and sanctify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.” (Qur’an 2: 129)

Elsewhere in the Qur’an, Allah ﷻ said that He ﷻ revealed glad tidings of the coming of Muhammad ﷺ to earlier Prophets ﷺ:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْنُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَإِذْ بَيْنَ أَمَانُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ (١٥٧)

“Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad ﷺ whom they find written with them in the Taurat (Torah) (Deut. xviii, 15) and the Injeel (Gospel) (John xiv, 16), – he commands them for Al-Ma’roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); he allows them as lawful At-Tayibat [(i.e., all good and lawful) as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.], and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khaba’ith (i.e., all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.), he releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allah’s Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muhammad ﷺ), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur’an)

which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful." (Qur'an 7: 157)

In particular, Allah ﷻ mentioned the glad tiding that Prophet 'Eesa (Jesus) gave to his people:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَحْيَىٰ إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ الْوَحْيِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ ۚ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ۝٦﴾

"And (remember) when 'Eesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), said : "O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Taurat [(Torah) which came] before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad. But when he (Ahmad, i.e., Muhammad ﷺ) came to them with clear proofs, they said : "This is plain magic." (Qur'an 61: 6)

And Allah ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ ۖ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ ۚ قَالَ أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِي ۚ قَالُوا أَقْرَرْنَا ۚ قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا ۚ وَأَنَا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ۝٨١﴾

"And (remember) when Allah took the Covenant of the Prophets, saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah (understanding of the Laws of Allah, etc.), and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) confirming what is with you ; you must, then, believe in him and help him." Allah said : "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up My Covenant (which I conclude with you)?" They said : "We agree." He said : "Then bear witness ; and I am with you among the witnesses (for this)." (Qur'an 3: 81)

There was a concerted effort on the part of some Jews and

Christians to distort their revealed books and to completely remove from them any mention of Muhammad ﷺ. Despite their efforts, the Prophet's name remained preserved in the Torah of As-Saamirah and the Gospels of Barnabas. As for the latter book, it was still in the hands of people prior to the advent of Islam, but around the end of the fifth century (of the Christian calendar), the church forbade its circulation. The scrolls that have recently been uncovered near the Dead Sea support what is mentioned in the Gospels of Barnabas about the Prophet ﷺ.

Ibn Taymiyyah said, "Narrations which establish that the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) knew the description of the Prophet ﷺ from their revealed books, are related in *Mutawaatir* form (i.e., so many people related such narrations that it is impossible for them to have conspired together in order to fabricate a lie)."^[1]

The native dwellers of Al-Madeenah from the Aus and Khazraj tribes - who then became known as the *Ansaar* - related in *Mutawaatir* form that the Jews of Al-Madeenah would inform them about the imminent appearance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They knew that he ﷺ was from the Arabs, and they were waiting for him. The fact that the *Ansaar* were foretold about the coming of the Prophet ﷺ is one of the main reasons that prompted them to believe in the Prophet ﷺ when he ﷺ invited them to Islam.

Salamah ibn Salaamah ibn Waqsh ؓ, a man from the *Ansaar*, was one of the Muslim participants in the Battle of Badr. He ؓ said, "We had a Jewish neighbour who lived among the clan of Banu 'Abd-Al-Ashhal (which was an idol-worshipping clan). Just prior to the advent of the Prophet ﷺ, this neighbour left his house, came out to us, and sat in the gathering of 'Abd-Al-Ashhal. That day, I was the youngest person in the gathering. Upon me was a robe, within which I was lying down in the courtyard of my family. He (his Jewish neighbour) mentioned resurrection, the

^[1] Refer to *Al-Jawaab As-Saheeh* by Ibn Taymiyyah (1/340).

Day of Resurrection, the accountability, the scale (in which good and bad deeds will be measured), Paradise, and the Hellfire. He was speaking to people who were polytheists and idol-worshippers, people who didn't believe in resurrection after death (here, he is speaking about his own clan, the Banu 'Abd-Al-Ashhal clan). They said to him, 'Woe upon you, O so-and-so. You really feel that people will be resurrected after death to an abode that contains in it a Garden and a Fire? And do you really believe that, in that abode, they will be rewarded for their deeds?' He said, 'Yes, in Whose name oaths are taken, I believe this.' He then said that, in the place of having his share of that Fire (in the Hereafter), he wished to enter the greatest oven on earth after it is first heated and before it is then closed upon him. That is how badly he wanted to be saved from that Fire (i.e., the Hellfire) tomorrow (i.e., in the Hereafter). They said to him, 'Woe unto you, and what is the sign of that happening?' He said, 'A Prophet will be sent in the direction of these lands.' And he pointed towards Makkah and Yemen.' They asked, 'And when will we see him.' The Jewish man looked at me – and I was one of the youngest people among them – and said, 'When this boy exhausts his years (i.e., reaches old age), he will be around when that Prophet is sent.' By Allah, the days and nights did not depart [for me (i.e., I did not die)] until Allah ﷻ sent His Messenger ﷺ, who was alive in our midst. We believed in him, but that very same Jewish man disbelieved in him, out of jealousy and as a form of transgression. We said to him, 'Woe upon you, O so-and-so. Were you not the one who said about him what you said.' He said, 'Yes, but that is not him.'"[1]

Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "In a copy of the *Zaboor* (the Psalms of David), I read a clear mention of the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, and he ﷺ was even mentioned by name. I saw another copy of the *Zaboor* in which no such mention is made (which points to distortion)."[2]

[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah*, by Ibraaheem Al-'Alee (pg. 31).

[2] *Al-Jawaab As-Saheeh* (1/340).

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ؓ said, "By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is described in the Torah with the same description that he ﷺ is given in the Qur'an:

"O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings, a warner, and protector of the illiterate ones (i.e., Arabs). You are My slave and Messenger. I have named you *Al-Mutawakkil*. He (now in the third person, but still referring to the Prophet ﷺ) is neither rude nor harsh, and he is not one who raises his voice in the marketplace (during disputes). He does not reciprocate evil with another evil; rather, he pardons and forgives. And Allah will not cause him to die until He establishes through him *Al-Millah Al-'Aujaa* (i.e., the religion of Ibraaheem ؑ, which the Arabs had changed and distorted), making them say, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah. Through him, Allah will open eyes that are blind, ears that are deaf, and hearts that are covered up.'"^[1]

And Ka'ab Al-Ahbaar said, "Verily, I found this written down in the Torah:

"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. He is neither rude nor harsh, and he is not one who raises his voice in the marketplace (while arguing with others). He does not reciprocate evil with another evil; rather, he pardons and forgives. The people of his nation are the extollers: they praise Allah in every plain, and they magnify Him (by saying, '*Allahuakbar*,' Allah is the Greatest) on every plateau. They wrap themselves up in loincloths up until the midway point of their bodies, and they perform ablution by washing their extremities. The way they line up in prayer and the way they line up in war is the same. Their Caller (to prayer) calls out in the open part of the sky (i.e., high up). And in the middle of the night, they make a sound that is similar to the sound of bees (i.e., a humming sound, and this refers to their late-night prayers and recitation of the Qur'an). He (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) will be born in Makkah, and will perform pilgrimage to Taabah (i.e., Al-

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Business Transactions"; chapter, "It is Disliked to Argue out Loud in Marketplaces." *Hadeeth* number: 2125. *Bukhaaree* also related it in the "Book of *Tafseer*." *Hadeeth* number: 4738.

Madeenah). And his rule will be in Ash-Sham (perhaps referring to the fact that, in the end times, Ash-Sham, which consists of Syria and neighbouring lands, will be one of the strongholds of Islam)."[1]

Before the advent of Islam, scholars from the People of the Book – at least the sincere ones among them – gave glad tidings of the coming of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. For example, while Salmaan Al-Faarisee ؓ was travelling from one land to another in search of the truth, he spent some time under the guidance of a monk, who once said to Salmaan ؓ, "Verily, the time of a Prophet who will be sent with the religion of Ibraaheem draws near. He will appear in the land of the Arabs, and he will migrate to a land that is situated between Harratain (land that is replete with volcanic rocks; this refers to the lands that border Al-Madeenah to the east and to the west). Between them (i.e., between Harratain, or in other words, in Al-Madeenah) are date-palm trees. He will have with him signs that are not hidden: He eats from what is given (to him) as a gift, but he doesn't eat what is given as charity; and the stamp of Prophethood is located between his shoulders. If you are able to go to those lands, then do so." [2]

Eventually, Salmaan ؓ made it to Al-Madeenah, though in the process he was wrongfully taken captive and turned into a slave. Shortly after Salmaan ؓ arrived there, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah. Wanting to put the monk's words to the test, Salmaan ؓ went to the Prophet ﷺ and gave him food, saying that he was giving it as charity. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave the food to his Companions ؓ, but did not eat any of it himself. Later on, Salmaan ؓ returned with more food; this time, he ؓ told the Prophet ﷺ that he was giving him the food not in charity, but as a gift. The Prophet ﷺ gave some of the food to his Companions ؓ, and ate some himself. Then on another occasion, Salmaan ؓ saw with his own two eyes the third and final sign: The stamp of Prophethood between the Prophet's shoulders. Salmaan ؓ then

[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pg. 30).

[2] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Katheer (1/300).

immediately embraced Islam.^[1]

Then there is the story of Abu At-Taihaan, who moved from his homeland in Ash-Sham in order to live in Al-Madeenah, among the Banu Quraizah tribe. Abu Taihaan died two years before the beginning of Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood. When he was on his deathbed, Abu Taihaan said to the members of the Banu Quraizah tribe, "O group of Jews, what do you think prompted me to move from the land of wine and leavened bread - Ash-Sham - to the land of suffering and hunger - Al-Hijaz (Al-Madeenah)?" They said, "You know best." He said, "I came to this city in order to wait for the appearance of the Prophet whose time is near at hand. I had hoped for him to be sent (during my lifetime), so that I could follow him."

Besides Abu Taihaan, other rabbis and scholars were also coming forth with information about the awaited Prophet. News of his arrival spread among Jews and other peoples; in fact, all of the Jews of Al-Madeenah believed with certainty that the awaited Prophet was soon to arrive.

The Jewish tribes of Al-Madeenah waged intermittent wars against the Aus and Khazraj tribes, both of which also fought against one another frequently. The Jewish tribes often changed alliances, sometimes siding with the Aus, and sometimes siding with the Khazraj. The Jews of Al-Madeenah would often say to their Arab neighbours, "Indeed, the time draws near when a Prophet will be sent. We will fight alongside him against you." Such threats had an unintended effect on the people of Aus and Khazraj, some among whom later said, "Along with the mercy of Allah ﷻ and His guidance, one of the factors that prompted us to embrace Islam is what we would hear from the Jews. We were the people of polytheism and idol-worship, and they were the People of the Book. They had knowledge that we did not possess. There was enmity between us, and when we would inflict upon them that which they disliked, they would say to us, 'Indeed, the time draws

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* by Al-'Umaree. (1/122).

near when a Prophet will be sent. We will fight alongside him against you.”^[1]

When the leader of the Romans, Haraql, received a letter from the Prophet ﷺ, he said, “I knew that he (the awaited Prophet) had come out, but I never thought that he would be one of you (i.e., an Arab).”^[2]

The General State Of Affairs Prior To The Advent Of Islam

In short, decadence and corruption were widespread. When evil begins to spread in any given society, individual men can, and often do, rise up to remedy affairs, but such a solution was not possible in the middle of the sixth century (of the Christian calendar). The situation didn't require the changing of one single belief or the removal of one evil practice; instead an entire outlook on life needed to be changed, and a new way of living needed to be introduced. Centuries of cumulated false beliefs and practices stood in the way of the necessary change, and individual reformers were not enough to solve the problem. To bring mankind out of darkness and into light, to transform men to the extent that they change into entirely new beings, Allah ﷻ sent a Messenger ﷺ to mankind. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ
مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾﴾

“Is he who was dead (without faith by ignorance and disbelief) and We gave him life (by knowledge and faith) and set for him a light (of belief) whereby he can walk amongst men, like him who is in the darkness (of disbelief, polytheism, and hypocrisy) from which he can never come out? Thus it is made fair-seeming to the

^{1]} Ibn Hisham, with a Hasan (acceptable) chain (1/231).

^{2]} Refer to Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah (pg. 146).

disbelievers that which they used to do.” (Qur’an 6: 122)

The most profound description of mankind’s state prior to and after the sending of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is given in the following Verse:

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءَ فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾﴾

“And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah (i.e., this Qur’an), and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allah’s Favour on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His Grace, you became brethren (in Islamic faith), and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) clear to you, that you may be guided.” (Qur’an 3: 103)

The Signs Of Prophethood That The Prophet ﷺ Witnessed

The coming mission of Prophethood was being hinted at in many ways to the Prophet ﷺ. For instance, Jaabir ibn Samurah ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ once said, “Verily, I know a stone in Makkah that would extend greetings of peace to me before I was sent (as a Prophet); indeed, I (still) know it now.”^[1] Also, even before Jibreel ؑ appeared to the Prophet ﷺ for the first time in the cave of Hira, the Prophet ﷺ would see true dreams: whatever he ﷺ would see in a dream would occur in exactly the same manner in real life.^[2] The Prophet ﷺ also felt an

^[1] Saheeh Muslim, “The Book of Virtues”; chapter, “The Superiority of the Prophet’s Lineage; Also, the Stone that Greeted Him Prior to Prophethood.” Hadeeth number: 2277.

^[2] For the exact wording of the Hadeeth that conveys this meaning, refer to Saheeh Bukhaaree, “The Beginning of Revelation.” Hadeeth number: 3.

inward change that occurred prior to his Prophethood: solitude and worship were made beloved to him. He ﷺ would seek out solitude and worship in the cave of Hira, which is situated just northwest of Makkah. He ﷺ would remain in the cave for a number of nights at a time, sometimes for 10 nights, sometimes for even longer – for upwards of an entire month. In between stays in the cave, the Prophet ﷺ would return to his home, remaining there for only a short while. Then when he ﷺ gathered more supplies, he ﷺ would return to the cave.



Revelation Descends, And The Phase Of Secret Preaching Begins



I

Revelation Descends To The Prophet ﷺ For The First Time

Until the Prophet ﷺ reached the age of forty, he ﷺ would seek solitude in the cave of Hira, where he would worship Allah ﷻ and contemplate the universe around him. He ﷺ would remain in the cave for a number of nights, leaving it only when he ﷺ ran out of provisions. He ﷺ would then go to his home, get the provisions he needed, and return to the cave for another succession of days.^[1] Imam Bukhaaree, who is known as the 'Father of authentic *Hadeeth* compilations, the books of *Sunan* and *Masaaneed*, and history books,' related that 'Aishah ؓ said, "The first form of revelation that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was initiated with, was the good (or true) dream that he would see in his sleep. Every dream that he saw became realized like the light of the morning (i.e., events occurred in the exact same manner that he had seen them occur in his dreams). Next, solitude was made beloved to him, and so he would isolate himself in the cave of Hira, where he would worship (Allah) for a number of nights before returning to his family and getting more provisions for the same purpose. He ﷺ would return to Khadeejah ؓ and furnish himself with a quantity of provisions that would last him a similar number of nights. This continued until the truth came to him while he ﷺ was in the cave of Hira. The Angel Jibreel ؑ came to

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah* (pg. 67).

him and said, 'Read.' He ﷺ answered, 'I am not of those who read (i.e., he ﷺ was illiterate).' The Prophet ﷺ (later) said, 'He then took me and embraced me with a strong embrace until I became very much fatigued, at which point he released me. He said: Read. And I said: I am not of those who read. He then took me and embraced me with a strong embrace for a second time, until I was (again) overcome by fatigue, at which point he released me and said: Read. I said: I am not of those who read. He then took me and embraced me with a strong embrace for a third time. He then released me and said:

﴿أَقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝١ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝٢ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝٣ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝٤ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝٥﴾

"Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists). He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, Who has taught (the writing) by the pen [the first person to write was Prophet Idrees (Enoch) ؑ]. He has taught man that which he knew not." (Qur'an 96: 1-5)

'Aishah ؓ continued to say, "His heart trembling, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned with them (i.e., with these revealed Verses in his heart). He ﷺ entered upon Khadeejah bint Khuwailid ؓ and said, 'Cover me! Cover me!' And so they covered him and, when the terror (of what had happened) left him, he informed Khadeejah ؓ about what had taken place, (after which he ﷺ said), 'I fear for myself (i.e., I fear that I have gone mad).' Khadeejah ؓ said, 'Never! By Allah, Allah will never forsake you, for you join ties of family relation, you bear the burdens of the weak, you give to people what no one else is able to give (in terms of benefits and good manners), you hospitably entertain your guests, and you help people who are afflicted with calamities.' Khadeejah ؓ took him to her cousin, Waraqah ibn Naufal ibn Asad ibn 'Abdul-'Uzzah, for he was a man who had embraced Christianity during the days of ignorance and was able to write in the Hebrew language. In Hebrew, he had transcribed from the

Injeel that amount which Allah ﷻ had willed him to transcribe. Waraqah was by that time an old man who had lost his sight. Khadeejah ؓ said to him, 'O my cousin, listen to what your nephew says.' Waraqah said, 'O my nephew, what is it that you see?' After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ finished telling him what he had seen, Waraqah said, 'He is *An-Naamoos* (i.e., Jibreel ؑ), whom Allah ﷻ had sent down to Moosa ؑ. I wish that I were a strong, young man! I wish to be alive when your people expel you (from your land).' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'And will they indeed expel me?' 'Yes,' said Waraqah ؓ. 'No man has ever come with what you come with, except that he has been treated as an enemy. If I am alive when that day of yours comes, I will indeed support you and help you a great deal.' Shortly thereafter, Waraqah ؓ died, and revelation let up [for a while (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ stopped receiving revelation for a while)]."^[1]

By contemplating this *Hadeeth*, we can infer a number of lessons that relate to the life of the Prophet ﷺ. Here are the most important of those lessons:

The Good Dream

'Aishah ؓ informed us that the 'good dream,' which is sometimes referred to as 'the true dream,' is the first form of revelation that the Prophet ﷺ received. What is meant here is the good dream through which one's heart opens up and one's soul becomes purified. Perhaps the wisdom behind the Prophet ﷺ receiving revelation in his sleep before receiving it while being awake was to prepare him for what was to come. Had the Prophet ﷺ not first seen 'true dreams,' and had the Angel Jibreel ؑ come to him upon a sudden, without the Prophet ﷺ having previously seen him, the Prophet ﷺ perhaps would have become so terrified that he would not be able to learn anything from what Jibreel ؑ was saying to him. But the Prophet ﷺ was prepared; to be sure, he ؓ was frightened, but he had already had a taste of revelation

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Beginning of Revelation." *Hadeeth* number: 3.

through the miraculous 'true dreams' he was seeing. And so if he wasn't literally waiting for Jibreel ﷺ to come to him, he ﷺ at least wasn't totally shocked when Jibreel ﷺ did come; after all, everything that was happening to him ﷺ was leading up to that moment, which is why he ﷺ was able to give clear answers to Jibreel's requests. Therefore, during the stage in which the Prophet ﷺ was seeing 'true dreams,' he ﷺ was being prepared and trained for the next phase of revelation: receiving revelation from Jibreel ﷺ while being fully awake.

In another *Hadeeth*, we learn that the true, good dream is one of forty-six parts of Prophethood. Al-Baihaquee mentioned that the scholars say, "The period during which the Prophet ﷺ was seeing 'good dreams' lasted for six months." It is important to note here that nothing from the Qur'an was revealed to him in his sleep, but rather the entire Qur'an was revealed to him while he ﷺ was awake.

The 'good dream' is a form of glad tidings that those other than the Prophet ﷺ might also see, for it is related that the Prophet ﷺ said, "O people, nothing remains from the glad tidings of Prophethood except for the good dream: A Muslim may see it, or it can be seen for him (i.e., someone else can see it for him)."^[1]

Before Jibreel ﷺ descended upon the Prophet ﷺ with revelation in the cave of Hira, the Prophet ﷺ would see beautiful dreams, from which he ﷺ would awaken in a state of bliss, open in mind and spirit to all of the beautiful things in life. What he ﷺ would see in these dreams would occur in real life in exactly the same manner. 'Aishah ؓ expressed this phenomenon beautifully when she said, 'like the light of the morning,' so that one can clearly understand that just as the light of the morning is glaringly clear, so too was the manner in which the Prophet's dreams were taking form in real life.

^[1] *Ibn Maajah*, "The Book of Dream Interpretations" *Hadeeth* number 3899 Its chain is *Hasan* (acceptable), and Al-Albaanee ruled that it is authentic in *Saheeh Ibn Maajah* (3161/3968)

Isolation Having Been Made Beloved To Him, The Prophet ﷺ Would Seek Out Solitude In The Cave Of Hira

Shortly before the Prophet ﷺ received revelation for the first time, solitude was made beloved to his soul. Freeing himself and his heart from the worries of life and thoughts of mundane day-to-day dealings with other people, the Prophet ﷺ was able to concentrate his mind, his thoughts, and his emotions on more important matters: reflecting on the purpose of life, contemplation the creation, and most important of all – worshipping Allah ﷻ. The cave of Hira thus became a place of worship for the Prophet ﷺ. Alone and stationed high up in the cave of a mountain, the Prophet ﷺ was able to have a clear and fresh perspective on what he saw around him: the beautiful clear sky, the majestically constructed mountains, the wonder of created beings – all attesting to the greatness and might of Allah ﷻ. The long hours of solitude were a kind of specific training for the Prophet ﷺ, for his heart was being purified from excessive attachment to worldly things. From his perspective high up in the cave of Hira, and with a contemplative frame of mind, the Prophet ﷺ appreciated the wonderful signs of Allah’s creation, all of which point to Allah’s almightiness and perfection.

In recent centuries, some ascetic orders have considered isolation to be one of the stages one must go through in order to achieve a higher level of spirituality. To be sure, moderate stints of isolation can be useful in illuminating one’s heart, in removing darkness from one’s soul, and in turning away from evil desires and lusts. One of the *Sunan* (plural of *Sunnah*) of the Prophet ﷺ is to perform *I’tikaaf* (to isolate oneself in a *Masjid*, in order to worship Allah ﷻ) during Ramadan. This form of isolation is something that every Muslim should strive to apply, regardless of whether he is a leader, a scholar, a businessman, or anyone else for that matter. The period of *I’tikaaf* is an ideal time for one to remove the blemishes that, through the continual perpetration of sins, become attached to one’s soul and heart. And while we perform

I'tikaaf, we should avail ourselves of the opportunity of judging ourselves, of seeing where we stand – of taking account of ourselves before we are taken to account for our actions (after we die). Scholars and *Du'aat* should especially make it a point to perform *I'tikaaf* and to use at least part of the time spent in *I'tikaaf* on studying the situation of the *Da'wah* and reflecting on how to better spread the teachings of Islam.

Finally, in regard to 'Aishah's saying, "He ﷺ would worship (in the cave) for a number of nights," Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah Daraaz said, "This expression means that the number of nights was neither very small nor very large. Therefore, even before the Prophet ﷺ received revelation for the first time, he was a paragon of moderation and justness in action. And this signaled the Prophetic guidance that was to come after Allah ﷻ would send him as a mercy to all that exists."^[1]

When The Truth Came To Him In The Cave Of Hira

The Angel Jibreel ؑ came and said, "Read." The Prophet ﷺ said, "I am not of those who can read," and he ﷺ later described what happened next: "He took me and embraced me with a strong embrace for a third time, and then he released me and said:

﴿أَفْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ﴾ ① خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ② أَفْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ③ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ④ ﴿

"Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists). He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, Who has taught (the writing) by the pen." (Qur'an 96: 1-4)

These blessed Verses were revealed before any other part of the Qur'an. In them, Allah ﷻ informs us that man was created from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood) and that He ﷻ has taught man that which he knew not.

^[1] *Al-Mukhtaar Min Kunooz As-Sunnah* (pg. 19).

This first meeting between Jibreel عليه السلام and the Prophet ﷺ was, to put it mildly, grand and momentous. We can scarcely perceive just how important it was, especially in terms of its far-reaching implications for all of mankind. The momentous moment during which the Prophet ﷺ received revelation through Jibreel عليه السلام for the first time is – without exaggeration – the greatest moment that has taken place on earth through its long history. What is the reality of the event that took place in this moment? It is that Allah – the Almighty, the All-Powerful, the King and Creator of all that exists – had mercy on and honoured, from above the seven heavens, creatures called human beings who live on a planet called earth, which is an infinitely small speck in the universe. Allah ﷻ honoured human beings by choosing one of them – one who would receive divine inspiration, one to whom His Words would descend, and one who would represent His Will on earth.^[1]

The significance of the pen, the importance of knowledge in building nations, man's quest for knowledge – these are the themes of the first revelation. We can appreciate the importance of knowledge when we reflect on the fact that the first word of revelation to the Prophet ﷺ was. "Read."

"Read! In the Name of your Lord."

In Islam, Muslims are both encouraged and commanded to seek out knowledge; also, the ranking of the people of knowledge is higher than others. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ انشُرُوا فَانْشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝﴾

"O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room. Allah will give you (ample) room (from His Mercy). And when you are told to rise up [for prayers, Jihaad (holy fighting in Allah's Cause), or for any

^[1] Summarized from Adh-Dhilaal Al-Qur'an (6/3936).

other good deed], rise up. Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.” (Qur’an 58: 11)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَنِيتُ إِئِنَّآءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ ۚ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولَؤُا الْأَلْبَابِ ۝٩﴾

“Is one who is obedient to Allah, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelievers)? Say: “Are those who know equal to those who know not?” It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e., get a lesson from Allah’s Signs and Verses).” (Qur’an 39: 9)

It is important to note here that beneficial knowledge is knowledge that is sanctioned by Islam. In seeking out knowledge, if one deviates from the teachings of Islam, one’s knowledge will harm one and even be the cause of one’s destruction.

The Intensity And Fatigue That Accompanied The First Revelation

Jibreel ﷺ repeatedly gave the Prophet ﷺ a strong embrace, so strong that after each embrace, the Prophet ﷺ was left weak and tired. Intensity, fatigue, difficulty, and heaviness – for the Prophet ﷺ these side effects continued to be the concomitants of receiving revelation, a fact that is alluded to in the following Verse:

﴿إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۝٥﴾

“Verily, We shall send down to you a weighty Word (i.e., obligations, legal laws, etc.).” (Qur’an 73: 5)

To be sure, though we may not perceive them all, there are great wisdoms behind the Prophet ﷺ receiving revelation in so stressful and difficult a manner. Perhaps one wisdom is to show the weightiness and great import of the message he ﷺ was being

inspired with, and to clarify to the Muslim nation that the religion they are blessed with came to them only after a process of stress, intensity, and fatigue for the Prophet ﷺ – or in other words, only after great sacrifice.

The process in which the Prophet ﷺ received revelation was a true miracle, and the whole reality of revelation is the foundation on which rests all aspects of the religion – beliefs, legislations, manners, etc. And it is for this reason that the Orientalists – and others of their ilk – have tried in so many ways to raise doubts about the reality of revelation. Ignoring what is related in authentic *Sunnah* compilations and what is written in the books of trustworthy historians, they falsely interpret and distort the reality of revelation, so that one of them says, “Muhammad learned the Qur’an and the fundamentals of Islam from Buhairah, the Monk.” Others among them say that Muhammad ﷺ was a nationalist or was afflicted with a disease that made him think he was seeing an angel.

The truth is that revelation was not an inward manifestation of the mind and soul; rather it was an outward manifestation: When the Prophet ﷺ was in the cave of Hira, he was surprised to literally see Jibreel ʾ عليه السلام situated before him. And Jibreel ʾ عليه السلام then literally embraced the Prophet ﷺ three times and said, “Read,” each time he released him.

The Prophet ﷺ was somewhat terrified by what he saw and heard, and, with a trembling heart, he quickly returned to his house, all of which proves that the Prophet ﷺ had not, up until then, been longing for the mission he was soon to be charged with. This point is further hinted at in the following Verses:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرٍ مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَٰكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا ۖ نَهْدِي بِهِ مَن نَّشَاءُ مِّنْ عِبَادِنَا وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ٥٢﴾
 صِرَاطَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ اِلٰى اللَّهِ
 تُصِرُّ الْأُمُورُ ﴿٥٣﴾

“And thus We have sent to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) Roohan (an Inspiration, and a Mercy) of Our Command. You knew not what is the Book, nor what is faith? But We have made it (this Qur’an) a light wherewith We guide whosoever of Our slaves We will. And verily, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the Straight Path (i.e., Allah’s religion of Islamic Monotheism). The Path of Allah, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. Verily, all the matters at the end go to Allah (for decision).” (Qur’an 42: 52, 53)

﴿وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا أَتَأْتِينَا بِقُرْآنٍ غَيْرِ هَذَا أَوْ بَدَّلْنَاهُ قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُ مِنْ تِلْقَائِي نَفْسِي ۚ إِنْ أَتَيْتُ إِلَّا مَا يُوْحَىٰ إِلَيَّ ۚ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابٌ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝١٥ قُلْ لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا تَلَوْتُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ قُرْآنًا وَلَا أَدْرَاكُمْ بِهِ ۖ فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِّن قَبْلِهِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ۝١٦﴾

“And when Our clear Verses are recited unto them, those who hope not for their meeting with Us, say: Bring us a Qur’an other than this, or change it: “Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “It is not for me to change it on my own accord; I only follow that which is revealed unto me. Verily, I fear if I were to disobey my Lord, the torment of the Great Day (i.e., the Day of Resurrection).” Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “If Allah had so willed, I should not have recited it to you nor would He have made it known to you. Verily, I have stayed amongst you a life time before this. Have you then no sense?” (Qur’an 10: 15, 16)

The notions that the Orientalists and others like them put forward regarding the reality of revelation collapse when confronted by the aforementioned authentic *Hadeeth*, which is related to us by ‘Aishah ؓ. In regard to the topic in question, Dr. Al-Bootee mentioned four relevant points:

- 1) We must make a clear distinction between the Qur’an and the *Sunnah*. As for the Qur’an, the Prophet ﷺ ordered his

Companions ﷺ to immediately write down the verses that were being revealed to him. On the other hand, he ﷺ deemed it sufficient for his Companions ﷺ to preserve his *Sunnah* in their memories, not because his sayings were from him and had nothing to do with his Prophethood; to the contrary, he spoke not from his own desires, but from divine revelation that was being inspired to him. The reason why he ordered his Companions ﷺ to write down the Qur'an is because it was revealed to him in an exact wording through Jibreel ﷺ. As for his sayings, the meanings they indicated were inspired from Allah ﷻ, but the wording with which they were expressed was from the Prophet ﷺ. And so in distinguishing between the Qur'an and his sayings – by recording one and not the other – the Prophet ﷺ was taking a necessary precaution to prevent the Qur'an, which he was receiving from Jibreel ﷺ, from getting mixed up with his own speech.

- 2) On certain occasions, when the Prophet ﷺ was asked about specific matters, he ﷺ would not answer; sometimes, he ﷺ would remain silent for a long time, while he ﷺ waited for Verses containing the answer to be revealed. And on other occasions, the Prophet ﷺ might have acted in a certain manner, and then Verses of the Qur'an came down, either to reproach him ﷺ or to steer him ﷺ towards a different course of action.
- 3) It is important to remember that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was illiterate. Being that he couldn't read or write, it was not possible for him to learn about historical events – such as the story of Yousuf ﷺ, the story of how the mother of Moosa ﷺ left her son in the sea, or the story of Fir'aun – through a process of introspection. And so this is one of the wisdoms behind the Prophet ﷺ being illiterate. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا كُنْتَ تَتْلُو مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّ بِيَمِينِكَ إِذَا لَأَزْتَابَ
الْمُبْطِلُونَ﴾ (٤٨)

“Neither did you (O Muhammad ﷺ) read any book before it (this Qur’an), nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand. In that case, indeed, the followers of falsehood might have doubted.” (Qur’an 29: 48)

- 4) Among his people, the Prophet ﷺ was famously known for his truthfulness during the first forty years of his life; it logically follows, therefore, that he was also truthful with himself. So in studying the reality of revelation and what was happening to him ﷺ, he ﷺ for sure realized that there was no need to doubt: what he was experiencing was real. As for the initial fears he had, the following Verse refutes them:

﴿إِن كُنتَ فِي شَكٍّ مِّمَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَسْأَلِ الَّذِينَ يَقْرَأُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَقَدْ جَاءَكَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ﴾ (٩٤)

“So if you (O Muhammad ﷺ) are in doubt concerning that which We have revealed unto you, [i.e., that your name is written in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)] then ask those who are reading the Book [the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)] before you. Verily, the truth has come to you from your Lord. So, be not of those who doubt (it) ” (Qur’an 10: 94)

It has been related that, after this Verse was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ said, “I do not doubt, and I do not ask.”^[1]

The Different Ways In Which The Prophet ﷺ Received Revelation

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, counted six ways in which the Prophet ﷺ received revelation:

1) The True Dream

This was the first form of revelation that the Prophet ﷺ received;

^[1] Related by At-Tabaraanee (17906, 17908), with his chain from Qataadah. Also, refer to *Tafseer Al-Qurtubee* (8/340)

every dream he saw came about in real life like the light of the morning. The following is related in a *Hadeeth*: "The dreams of the Prophets are (a form of) revelation." Referring to Ibraaheem ؑ, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ يَبْنَىٰٓ اِنِّىۤ اَرَىۤ فِىۤ اَلْمَنَامِ اَنِّىۤ اَذْبَحُكَ﴾

"He said : "O my son! I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you (offering you in sacrifice to Allah"). (Qur'an 37: 102)

2) Inspiration

This involved the angel blowing into the Prophet's heart, without the Prophet ﷺ being able to see him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentioned an instance of this happening: "Indeed *Roohul-Qudus* (Jibreel) blew into my heart that, verily, no person dies until he gets his full share of sustenance (i.e., the share that Allah ﷻ had decreed for him to get) and until his fixed term comes to an end (i.e., the fixed age that Allah ﷻ had decreed for him to reach). So fear Allah, and seek out (your sustenance) in a good and beautiful manner (by avoiding unlawful means of gaining sustenance, by being fair in business dealings, by not being greedy, etc.)."^[1]

3) Revelation That Would Come To Him Like The Ringing Of A Bell

Of all the different ways in which the Prophet ﷺ received revelation, this was hardest upon him. 'Aishah ؓ related that Al-Haarith ؓ once asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, "How does revelation come to you?" He ﷺ said, "Sometimes, it comes to me like the ringing of a bell, and this is the hardest for me (to endure). When it (the loud ringing noise) ceases, I remember what he (Jibreel) said. And sometimes the Angel Jibreel comes to me in the form of a man; he speaks to me, and I then understand and remember what he says."^[2]

^[1] *Zaad Al-Ma'aad* (1/79). By dint of corroborating narrations, this *Hadeeth* is *Saheeh*.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Beginning of Revelation." *Hadeeth* number: 2.

4) Revelation That Is Inspired To The Prophet ﷺ, Not By Way Of Jibreel ؑ, But Directly From Allah ﷻ

Allah ﷻ spoke directly to the Prophet ﷺ, just as He ﷻ spoke directly to Moosa ibn 'Imraan ؑ. The latter is mentioned in the Qur'an, and the former is established in the *Sunnah*, and it occurred when the Prophet ﷺ made his miraculous night journey to the heavens.

5) The Prophet ﷺ Would See Jibreel ؑ In The Form Upon Which He Was Created

The Prophet ﷺ saw Jibreel ؑ twice in his original form, the form upon which he ؑ was created – with 600 wings – Once, shortly after receiving revelation for the first time, and once when he ﷺ made his miraculous night journey to the heavens.

6) Jibreel ؑ Would Sometimes Come To The Prophet ﷺ In The Form Of A Man

On some of the occasions that this occurred, the Prophet's Companions ؓ saw Jibreel ؑ, such as when he ؑ came in the form of a Bedouin and asked the Prophet ﷺ a number of questions – about Islam, *Eemaan*, *Ihsaan*, the signs of the Hour.

The coming down of revelation to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ signaled a new era in the history of human beings, the previous era being one during which revelation had ceased to descend for hundreds of years (the previous Prophet ؑ being 'Eesa ؑ), so that the world had become engulfed in darkness and ignorance.

We know from his biography that the Prophet ﷺ was the bravest of people and the strongest of them in heart and spirit. Nonetheless, as we have hitherto mentioned, the process of receiving revelation was very hard upon the Prophet ﷺ. This is because of the weightiness of the Message he ﷺ was receiving; furthermore, he ﷺ was not conversing with another human

being; to the contrary, he ﷺ was being addressed by the greatest of the angels, who was carrying with him Allah's speech. The act of receiving revelation was frightening in that it represented a tremendous responsibility, one that could be fulfilled by no human being except for one whom Allah ﷻ had chosen for the task of carrying and conveying the message of Islam.

We can gain some sense of the terrifying impact that revelation had the first time it descended upon the Prophet ﷺ by remembering what the Prophet ﷺ said when he ﷺ returned to Khadeejah ﷺ: "I indeed fear for myself (i.e., I fear that I have gone mad)." And 'Aishah ﷺ said: "His heart trembling, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned with them (with these revealed Verses in his heart). He ﷺ entered upon Khadeejah bint Khuwailid ﷺ and said, 'Cover me! Cover me!' And so they covered him and, when the terror (of what had happened) left him, he informed Khadeejah ﷺ about what had taken place."

The following *Hadeeth* also informs us of how severe the process of receiving revelation was for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Bukhaaree and Muslim – may Allah have mercy on them both – related that 'Aishah ﷺ said, "I was watching him (i.e., the Messenger of Allah ﷺ) when revelation was descending upon him on a particularly cold day. When it ceased coming down, sweat was oozing from his forehead."^[1] In another narration, 'Ubaadah ibn As-Saamit ﷺ said, "When revelation would descend upon the Prophet of Allah ﷺ, he would in consequence be overcome by distress, and the colour of his face would change from white to black (from the weightiness of the Message he ﷺ was receiving)."^[2]

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Beginning of Revelation." *Hadeeth* number: 2. Muslim related it as well in the "Book of Virtues", chapter, "The Sweating of the Prophet ﷺ in Cold Weather." *Hadeeth* number: 2333

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Virtues." *Hadeeth* number: 2334.

The Positive Impact, A Righteous Woman Can Have In Serving The Religion

"His heart trembling, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned with them (with these revealed Verses in his heart). He ﷺ entered upon Khadeejah bint Khuwailid ؓ and said, 'Cover me! Cover me!' And so they covered him and, when the terror (of what had happened) left him, he informed Khadeejah ؓ about what had happened, (after which he said), 'I fear for myself (i.e., I fear that I have gone mad).' Khadeejah ؓ said, 'Never! By Allah, Allah will never forsake you, for you join ties of family relation, you bear the burdens of the weak, you give to people what no one else is able to give (in terms of benefits and good manners), you hospitably entertain your guests, and you help people who are afflicted with calamities.'"

Khadeejah's attitude and reaction upon hearing the Prophet's account of his first encounter with Jibreel ؑ points to her profound wisdom, understanding, and strength of heart. She was not frightened or startled; rather, she was the opposite: relaxed and calm. In her mind, she compared what she was hearing with the reality of the Prophet's character and manners. Then she arrived at the only possible correct conclusion: if one, by his very nature, is possessed of all good qualities, characteristics, and manners, then Allah ﷻ will never forsake him. She reminded him about how good he ﷺ was to his relatives, which was an apt remark, for if a person is successful in keeping good relations with his relatives – who are the closest of people to him – then it is only natural that he will be successful in doing the same with other people. This was particularly appropriate since the Prophet ﷺ was being prepared to convey the divine message of Islam to all of mankind. After reminding the Prophet ﷺ about his many good qualities, Khadeejah ؓ wisely took him to the one person she knew who could advise him – her cousin, Waraqah ؓ, who had become a Christian and who had told her that he was waiting for the coming of a Prophet in Arabia.

Khadeejah ؓ believed, and in fact knew, from the depths of her heart that the Prophet ﷺ possessed a noble character and the highest of manners and qualities. She inferred from this knowledge that the Prophet ﷺ would never in his life be subjected to shame and humiliation. This inference was most probably drawn from a general knowledge of historical principles: Whenever Allah ﷻ blesses one of his slaves with noble and good characteristics, He ﷻ will not make that slave taste humiliation and shame in his life. And Muhammad ﷺ, Khadeejah ؓ knew, had reached the pinnacle of nobility and goodness of character.

Khadeejah ؓ took the Prophet ﷺ to her cousin Waraqah ibn Naufal – may Allah have mercy on him. Waraqah ؓ, Khadeejah ؓ knew, was waiting for the emergence of the final Prophet to be sent to mankind, an event that he learned about from Christian (and perhaps also Jewish) scholars, who pointed out to him that that awaited Prophet was soon due to appear. The words that Waraqah spoke to the Prophet ﷺ had a very soothing and strengthening effect on the Prophet's heart. He informed the Prophet ﷺ that the being that had spoken to him was Jibreel ؑ, who was a messenger between Allah ﷻ and His Prophets ﷺ.

In the course of their conversation, Waraqah ؓ did not hesitate but instead immediately believed that Muhammad ﷺ was the awaited Prophet, the final Messenger sent to mankind. The Prophet ﷺ later issued a statement, making it clear that Waraqah ؓ was one of the dwellers of Paradise. Al-Haakim related from 'Aishah ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not curse Waraqah, for I indeed saw that he had a garden or two gardens (in Paradise)." [1] In another narration, 'Aishah ؓ related that Khadeejah ؓ once asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about Waraqah, and he ﷺ answered, "I did indeed see him, and when I did, I saw upon him white garments. I would judge that had he been from the dwellers

[1] *Al-Mustadrak* (2/609). After he mentioned this *Hadeeth*, Al-Haakim said, "It fulfills the conditions of (Imam) Muslim," and Adh-Dhahabee concurred with him on this point.

of Hell, he wouldn't have had upon him white garments." And Al-Haithamee said, "Abu Ya'laa related with a *Hasan* (acceptable) chain from Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah ؓ that, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about Waraqah ibn Naufal, he ﷺ said, 'I saw him in the middle of Paradise, and upon him was a silk brocade.'"^[1]

Khadeejah ؓ played an indispensable role in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. To be sure, Allah ﷻ guided the Prophet ﷺ to marry an ideal wife, one that, like her husband, was by her very nature all that is good, and as such, she became the best role model for all women who came after her. She ؓ is particularly a role model for women whose husbands are *Du'aat* (those who invite others to the teachings of Islam), for *Du'aat* are not like other men: they carry the burden of a message and their efforts are constantly directed at solving the problems of not only their families, but of the entire Muslim nation. Great sacrifices – in terms of time, energy, and resources – are required of such men; they even have to give up some of the time that they would otherwise spend in the company of their families. They therefore need wives who appreciate the burdens that their husbands carry, who recognize the importance of conveying Islam to both Muslims and non-Muslims, and who stand alongside, and not in the way of, their husbands.

A righteous wife has the potential of having a tremendously positive impact on the success of the *Da'wah*; we have no better example that attests to this fact than the life of Khadeejah ؓ and the way she stood side by side with the Prophet ﷺ from the very outset of his Prophethood. So whenever a *Daa'ee* is blessed with a righteous wife, he is one step closer to achieving success in his dealings with others. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ put it best when he ﷺ said, "The world is *Mataa'* (*Mataa'* is anything from which pleasure can be derived), and the best *Mataa'* of the world is a righteous wife."^[2]

^[1] *Majma' Az-Zawaaid* (9/416).

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Nursing"; chapter, "The Best Enjoyment of the World is a Righteous Wife." *Hadeeth* number: 1467.

The Prophet's Loyalty To Khadeejah ﷺ

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was supremely loyal to his sincere and righteous wife Khadeejah ؓ, both while she was alive and after she died. While Khadeejah ؓ was alive, the Prophet ﷺ gave her glad tidings of a house in Paradise, and he ﷺ conveyed greetings of peace to her from Allah ﷻ and Jibreel ؑ, as is recorded in a narration that is related by Abu Hurairah ؓ: "Jibreel ؑ went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, here is Khadeejah come to you (she had not arrived, but was coming; Jibreel ؑ knew this because Allah ﷻ blessed him with some knowledge of the unseen), and with her is a container of *Idaam* (any food item that is eaten with bread) – or food or drink. When she comes to you, convey to her *As-Salaam* (peace) from her Lord ﷻ and from me. And give her glad tidings of a house in Paradise made of *Qasab* (hollowed out pearls or gold); there will be neither loud clamor nor fatigue in that house (just as Khadeejah ؓ did not shout or scream at her husband ﷺ, but was rather a faithful wife, so too will her house in Paradise be bereft of screaming and loud noises – a reward that is befitting of the deed. Similarly, just as Khadeejah ؓ did not tire her husband with nagging or complaining, her house in Paradise will be void of fatigue – also, a reward that is befitting of the deed).'"^[1]

"Aishah ؓ later recalled the Prophet's loyalty to Khadeejah ؓ: "I was not as jealous of any of the Prophet's wives as I was of Khadeejah ؓ, and I had not even seen her. But the Prophet ﷺ would mention her very frequently; he might (at times) have slaughtered a sheep, cut it into pieces, and then sent (the meat) to Khadeejah's friends (in memory of Khadeejah ؓ). And I might have then said to him, 'It is as if there is no woman in the world other than Khadeejah!' And he ﷺ would then say, 'She was this and she was that (i.e., he ﷺ would begin to enumerate her good qualities), and I had children from her.'"^[2]

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Virtues of Companions"; chapter, "The Virtues of Khadeejah, the Mother of the Believers ؓ." *Hadeeth* number: 2432.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Virtues of the Ansaar." *Hadeeth* number: 3818.

To be sure, the Prophet ﷺ continued to remember and honour Khadeejah ؓ even after she died. After the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah, some Muslims were forced to remain behind in Makkah – one such Muslim being Haalah ؓ, sister of Khadeejah ؓ. Haalah ؓ did eventually manage to migrate to Al-Madeenah, and when she arrived there, she went to visit the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was sleeping at the time. When he ﷺ awoke to hear someone asking permission to enter, he became excited and happy, and he ﷺ said, “O Allah, let her be Haalah bint Khuwailid.” Recognizing the similarity of voice between Haalah ؓ and his beloved wife, Khadeejah ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ became happy and good memories of his wife were rekindled in his mind. ‘Aishah ؓ, who was present when this occurred, later recounted, “I became jealous and said, ‘And why do you mention (or remember) an old lady from the old women of the Quraish – a women whose gums are red (i.e., due to old age, she has lost all of her teeth). She has passed away long ago, and Allah ﷻ has compensated you with better than her.’”^[1] And on yet another occasion, the Prophet ﷺ gave a warm and hospitable welcome to a woman that used to visit his household during the days in which he ﷺ was married to Khadeejah ؓ.

It Was The Way Of All Nations For People To Disbelieve In The Messengers That Were Sent To Them

Waraqah said, “O my nephew, what is it that you see?” After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ finished telling him what he had seen, Waraqah said, “He is *An-Naamoos* (i.e., Jibreel ؑ), whom Allah ﷻ had sent down to Moosa ؑ. I wish that I were a strong, young man! I wish to be alive when your people expel you (from your land).” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “And will they indeed expel me?” “Yes,” said Waraqah ؓ. “No man has ever come with what you come with, except that he has been treated as an enemy.

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, chapter, “The Prophet’s Marriage to Khadeejah ؓ, and Her Superiority.” Muslim related it as well in the “Book of the Companions’ Virtues”; chapter, “The Virtues of Khadeejah ؓ.” *Hadeeth* number: 2437.

If I am alive when that day of yours comes, I will indeed support you and help you a great deal.”^[1]

Throughout history, Prophets and Messengers have, as a general rule, been received with rejection and disdain from their very own people. Regarding the people of Loot, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا آلَ لُوطٍ مِنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ
إِنَّهُمْ أَنْأَسُ يَنْطَهُرُونَ﴾ ٥٦ ﴿

“There was no other answer given by his people except that they said: “Drive out the family of Loot (Lot) from your city. Verily, these are men who want to be clean and pure!” (Qur’an 27: 56)

About the people of Shu’aib, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكَ وَيَشْعِيبَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَكَ
مِنْ قَرْيَتِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودَنَّ فِيْ مِلَّتِنَا قَالَ أُولَئِكَ كَانُوا فِيْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾ ٨٨ ﴿

“The chiefs of those who were arrogant among his people said: “We shall certainly drive you out, O Shu’aib, and those who have believed with you from our town, or else you (all) shall return to our religion.” He said: “Even though we hate it!” (Qur’an 7: 88)

And in yet another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودَنَّ فِيْ
مِلَّتِنَا فَأَوْحَى إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ ١٣ ﴿

“And those who disbelieved, said to their Messengers: “Surely, we shall drive you out of our land, or you shall return to our religion.” So their Lord inspired them: “Truly, We shall destroy the Zaalimoon (polytheists, disbelievers, and wrong-doers).” (Qur’an 14: 13)

[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, “The Beginning of Revelation.” Hadeeth number: 3. Muslim related it as well in “The Book of Faith”; chapter, “The Beginning of Revelation.” Hadeeth number: 160.

‘And Revelation Let Up (For A While)’

Among scholars, there has been much discussion about the meaning of, “And revelation let up (for a while).” Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar said, “The letting up of revelation means that it stopped coming down for a period of time. The reason why this happened was to allow enough time for the terror that had seized the Prophet ﷺ to depart, and to make him long for the return of revelation.”^[1]

Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah Al-Ansaaree ؓ related that, while talking about the letting up of revelation, the Prophet ﷺ said, “While I was walking, I heard a voice in the sky. I raised my gaze (to the sky), and there was the Angel who had come to me in (the cave of) Hira. He was seated on a throne (or chair) between the heavens and the earth, and I became frightened by him. I then returned [to my home (or to my family)] and said, ‘Cover me.’ Then Allah ﷻ revealed the following:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَدَنِيُّ ۝١ قُمْ فَأَنذِرْ ۝٢ وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ۝٣ وَبَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ ۝٤ وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ ۝٥﴾

“O you (Muhammad ﷺ) enveloped (in garments)! Arise and warn! And your Lord (Allah) magnify! And your garments purify! And keep away from Ar-Rujz (the idols)!” (Qur’an 74: 1-5)

The Prophet ﷺ continued to say, “Revelation intensified and (Verses) then came (down) in succession.”^[2]

In his widely read book, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtoom*, Safee-ur-Rahmaan Al-Mubaarakpooree wrote:

“Ibn Sa’d related from Ibn ‘Abbaas ؓ a narration which indicates that it was only for a number of days that revelation ceased coming down. The strongest of the various views in the matter is that it was only a matter of days; in fact, it is the only possible

^[1] *Fathul-Baaree* (1/36).

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Beginning of Revelation.” *Hadeeth* number: 4.

correct view if one studies the matter from all angles. And though this is not the place to refute other views, I will say that it is categorically false that revelation stopped coming down to the Prophet ﷺ for a period of two and a half or three years. Another thing we know is that, during the period in which revelation stopped coming down, the Prophet ﷺ became extremely confused and sad, not knowing what to make of all that was happening to him.”^[1]

In his *Saheeh*, Imam Bukhaaree mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ became so sad and confused that he went a number of times to jump down from the peaks of mountains. Each time he reached the peak of a mountain and intended to jump off of it, Jibreel ﷺ appeared to him and said, “O Muhammad, indeed you are truly the Messenger of Allah.” Jibreel’s appearance and words had the effect of calming and soothing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he ﷺ would then return to Makkah. But when the period of waiting became even more prolonged, he ﷺ went again to the peak of a mountain, and again Jibreel ﷺ appeared before him and spoke similarly reassuring words.^[2]

^[1] *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtoom* (pgs. 79 and 80 from the Arabic version of the book).

^[2] Refer to *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Beginning of Revelation”; chapter, “The True Dream was the First Form of Revelation to which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was Introduced.”

2

Secret Preaching

A Command From Allah ﷻ To Convey His Message

The Prophet ﷺ now knew for certain that he was a Prophet sent by Allah ﷻ – the Most Merciful, the Most Generous. When Jibreel ﷺ came to the Prophet ﷺ for a second time, Allah ﷻ revealed to him these Verses:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَدِينُ ۖ قُمْ فَأَنذِرْ ۚ وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ۚ وَبَابِكَ فَطَهِّرْ ۚ﴾ ① ② ③ ④

“O you (Muhammad ﷺ) enveloped (in garments)! Arise and warn! And your Lord (Allah) magnify! And your garments purify!” (Qur’an 74: 1-4)

These Verses announced to the Prophet ﷺ that the past, with its calmness and rest, was over with, and that before him lay a monumental mission, one that required preparedness, vigilance, patience, and hard work.

These are the first set of Verses revealed to the Prophet ﷺ in which he was commanded to convey the teachings of Islam. They were meant to motivate the Messenger of Allah ﷻ into action and to encourage him to live up to the duties he was being entrusted with, without caring about any obstacle that stood in the way of his fulfilling his mission. The first Verse certainly aroused his attention: “O you (Muhammad ﷺ) enveloped (in garments)!.” It was now time to bid farewell to the days of rest and comfort. This call was then followed up by a positive command: “Arise and

warn." It is interesting to note that, in other Verses, the Prophet ﷺ is mentioned as being both a bearer of glad tidings and a warner, but that here he is commanded to warn only. This was to notify the Prophet ﷺ that his Message was going to be met by resistance and that, in consequence, patience and struggle were going to be required of him.

"And your Lord (Allah) magnify!." This means: Do not magnify anything from the creation, do not think that anything people attack you with is great or insuperable, do not fear them, and do not glorify and magnify anyone but your Lord. All glorification and praise is for Allah alone, and He ﷻ has no partner.

"And your garments purify!." This means: True, you have been pure and noble based on the nature that Allah ﷻ has created you upon, and He ﷻ endowed you with those qualities to prepare you for this day. But from now on, you will need to become even more purified and even more honourable in your character: from this time forth, you are the Messenger of Allah, sent to both humans and jinns. To properly convey the message of Islam, you will have to be complete in your character, your level of patience, and your overall goodness.

"And keep away from *Ar-Rujz* (the idols)!." It is as if this is being said to the Prophet ﷺ: Previously, it was due to the nature and purity which Allah ﷻ created you upon that you stayed away from the worship of idols; now, do the same, but with the intention of doing so for Allah ﷻ.

The Early Stages Of Secret Calling

After the above-mentioned Verses of *Al-Muddatthir* were revealed, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began by secretly inviting others to Islam; by 'secretly,' I mean that he ﷺ began by inviting a select group of individuals. He ﷺ naturally began with the closest people to him – the members of his household and his close friends:

1) Khadeejah ﷺ

Khadeejah ﷺ was the first woman, or rather the first person, to

believe in the Prophet ﷺ. She was also the first person to hear revealed Verses from the mouth of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and consequently was the first person (of course other than the Prophet ﷺ) to recite the Qur'an. She was also the first person who learned how to pray from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The first duty that Allah ﷻ made obligatory was to believe in Islamic Monotheism (i.e., *Tawheed*); the second was prayer.

Some narrations give an account of how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught Khadeejah ؓ how to pray and perform ablution. It began with Jibreel ؑ performing ablution, while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ watched and learned. He ﷺ then performed ablution himself in the same manner. Jibreel ؑ then stood and led the Prophet ﷺ in prayer. Afterwards, when Jibreel ؑ had left, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to Khadeejah ؓ and, just as Jibreel ؑ had done earlier, performed ablution in order to show her how she should purify herself for prayer. After Khadeejah ؓ finished performing ablution, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ led her in prayer, praying in the same manner that Jibreel ؑ had prayed shortly earlier.^[1]

2) 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؑ

Shortly after Khadeejah ؓ embraced Islam, 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؑ also entered into the fold of Islam. He was the first child to embrace Islam, being 10 years old at the time, at least according to the strongest view in the matter, two proponents of which are At-Tabaree and Ibn Ishaq.^[2] Earlier on in the Prophet's life, Abu Taalib was experiencing financial difficulties. Wanting to lighten the financial load that was holding his beloved uncle down, the Prophet ﷺ offered to take in one of his children and act as his guardian. The child he took in was 'Alee ؑ.^[3] So even before the Prophet ﷺ received revelation for the first time, 'Alee ؑ was one

^[1] *Ibn Hishaam* (1/244), and *Ma'een As-Seerah* by Saaleh Ash-Shamee (pg. 41).

^[2] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abu Shuhbah (1/284).

^[3] *Ibn Hishaam* (1/246).

of the members of his household. 'Alee ؑ was the third person – the first being the Prophet ﷺ and the second Khadeejah ؑ – to perform prayer.^[1] The people of knowledge mention that, during the very early days of his Prophethood, the Prophet ﷺ would, at the time of prayer, go out to the valleys of Makkah. 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؑ would go with him, but in a clandestine manner, making sure not to be seen by his father, his uncles, or, for that matter, anyone else from the Quraish. They performed all the day's prayers in a valley, and then they would return home at nightfall.

3) Zaid ibn Haarithah ؑ

Zaid, known as *Hibbun-Nabee* (the beloved one of the Prophet ﷺ), was the first freed slave to embrace Islam. Having first entered the household of the Prophet ﷺ as a slave, Zaid ؑ loved the Prophet ﷺ a great deal, and his love was likewise reciprocated. Zaid ؑ, originally a free person from a family of free people, was taken captive as a child during a raid and was subsequently enslaved. He ؑ was eventually purchased in Makkah, which is how he ended up in the household of the Prophet ﷺ. His father came looking for him, and found him in Makkah years after he had been taken a captive. When Zaid's father explained what had happened to his son, the Prophet ﷺ said that Zaid ؑ should decide whether he wanted to stay or return with his father. Zaid's father readily agreed to this proposal, for who would choose to be a slave rather than return with his father as a free individual? But by that time, Zaid ؑ had gotten to know the wonderful character of the Prophet ﷺ, and Zaid's love for the Prophet ﷺ was so great that he chose him over his own father. Zaid ؑ said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, "I would never choose anyone over you. To me, you rank equal to a father and an uncle." His father and uncle both said, "Woe unto you! Will you choose slavery over freedom! And will you choose someone over your father, uncle, and family!" Zaid ؑ said, "Yes. I have indeed seen such things

^[1] *Uyoon Al-Athar* by Ibn Sayyid An-Naas (1/115).

from this man that make me say with certainty that I would never choose anyone over him.”^[1] The Prophet ﷺ then freed Zaid ؓ and adopted him. This of course all happened before Islam, for with the advent of Islam, adoption (the practice of changing a child’s name, so that he becomes known by his adoptive, and not birth, parents) became prohibited, so that Zaid ibn (son of) Muhammad once again became known by his original name: Zaid ibn Haarithah ؓ.

4) The daughters of the Prophet ﷺ

All of the Prophet’s daughters – Zainab ؓ, Umm Kulthoom ؓ, Faatimah ؓ, and Ruqaiyyah ؓ – raced to embrace Islam. Even before Islam, they benefited from the noble character of their father, so that, like their father, they were upright people who stayed away from the evils of the polytheistic Quraish society. With their acceptance of Islam, the Prophet’s household became the first family from this nation that believed in Allah ﷻ and practiced the teachings of Islam, which is one of the reasons why Khadeejah ؓ is of such a high ranking among the Prophet’s Companions ؓ. It was in that blessed household that:

- ◆ The Qur’an was first recited, after Verses of it were revealed in the cave of Hira.
- ◆ The first follower of the Prophet ﷺ resided.
- ◆ Prayer was first established.
- ◆ The three first believers gathered together: Khadeejah ؓ, ‘Alee ؓ, and Zaid ibn Haaritha ؓ.
- ◆ Each individual member pledged to support the Prophet ﷺ, a pledge that each one of them fulfilled.

It was truly an ideal Muslim family, and the conjugal relationship of the Prophet ﷺ and Khadeejah ؓ embodies the meanings contained in the following Verse:

^[1] Refer to *Diraasah Tahleeliyyah Li-Shakhsiyyatir-Rasool* ﷺ by Dr. Muhammad Qal’ajee, pg. 191.

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ فَلَمَّا أَثْقَلَتْ دَعَوَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْنَا صَالِحًا لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٨٩﴾﴾

"It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and (then) He has created from him his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of living with her. When he had sexual relation with her, she became pregnant and she carried it about lightly. Then when it became heavy, they both invoked Allah, their Lord (saying): 'If You give us a Salih (good in every aspect) child, we shall indeed be among the grateful.'"
(Qur'an 7: 189)

The way in which the Prophet ﷺ and Khadeejah رضي الله عنها raised their children embodies the meaning that is alluded to in the *Hadeeth*: "Every single newborn is born upon the *Fitrah* (the inborn disposition of being a Muslim). Then it is his parents who make him into a Jew, into a Christian, or into a Magian."^[1] The Prophet's children were born upon the *Fitrah* (the inborn disposition of being a Muslim), and then their parents raised them in such a way as to keep them upon the *Fitrah*.

Islam places great importance upon both society and the individual, and the individual is introduced into society by means of a family. It is within the context of a family that an individual develops his characteristics and qualities. Therefore, the family acts as an intermediary between the individual and society. If the intermediary is sound and good, then the entities that are at its furthest edges – the individual and society – will be strengthened and improved. This is why Islam stresses the importance of family. Each family must be a strong link in the establishment of an Islamic society. We can see the importance

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Funerals." *Hadeeth* number: 1358. Imam Muslim related it as well, in "The Book of Divine Preordainment"; chapter, "The Meaning of: Every Child is Born upon the *Fitrah*." *Hadeeth* number: 2658.

given to the family in the very early stages of the Prophet's Mission. After all, the first person to embrace Islam was his wife, Khadeejah ﷺ – which also establishes the important role that women play in Islam. Then 'Alee ﷺ, at the time a young child, embraced Islam, which shows the importance of performing *Da'wah* to the youth, to the next generation of Muslims.

It is most interesting to contemplate the kinds of people the Prophet ﷺ first invited to Islam: Khadeejah ﷺ, a woman; Zaid ibn Haarithah ﷺ, a freed slave; 'Alee ﷺ, a child. This clearly proves that the message of Islam is directed towards all people – to the young and old, to men and women, to masters and slaves. Each individual member of society has an important role to play in the establishment of a Muslim society and country.

5) Abu Bakr ﷺ

Abu Bakr ﷺ was the first free man to embrace Islam, and even before the advent of Islam, he ﷺ was one of the closest friends of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Throughout their long years of friendship, Abu Bakr ﷺ became very much acquainted with the noble character of the Prophet ﷺ, which is why it is not much of a surprise that he embraced Islam without hesitating in the least. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Every single person I invited to Islam stumbled, hesitated, and considered the matter – except for Abu Bakr. When I invited him, he neither wavered nor hesitated (to the contrary, he raced to embrace Islam)."^[1] Abu Bakr ﷺ was not just a free man; he ﷺ was also a nobleman and was well-respected among the Quraish for many reasons:

- ◆ The people of the Quraish loved him for his manners and agreeable nature.
- ◆ In terms of lineage, he was one of the noblest members of the Quraish. Also, he knew more about the family trees of Quraish's individuals than anyone else. In fact, he was a recognized scholar of genealogy, being well-versed in the

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Shuhbah (1/284).

family trees of not just the Quraish but of all Arabs.

- ◆ He was a businessman who was known for his fair dealings and good manners.
- ◆ He was very popular among Quraish's nobles, who would come to him for his knowledge, his expertise in business – or simply for his good company.

Let us dwell for a moment on this last point: Abu Bakr's popularity among the Quraish. Why did the people of the Quraish love him so much? Well, obviously there is his pleasant and affable nature, which made him easily accessible to anyone who wanted his company. Then there is his knowledge of genealogy and history. It was a recognized fact among the Quraish that no one knew more about their genealogy and history than Abu Bakr ﷺ. Therefore, the intellectual members of Quraish's society, as well as young men eager to gain knowledge, frequented Abu Bakr's gatherings. More worldly and practical-minded people also frequented Abu Bakr's gatherings, for if he wasn't the richest businessman among the Quraish, he was the most respected and famous of them. Even commoners and poor people frequented Abu Bakr's gatherings, for, being hospitable and generous, he ﷺ heartily welcomed all of his guests. Therefore, every echelon of society benefited from the company of Abu Bakr ﷺ. It was for this reason that, when the message of Islam began to spread, so many people embraced Islam at his hands; here are some examples: 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan ﷺ, 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn 'Auf ﷺ, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ, Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awaam ﷺ, and Talhah ibn 'Ubaidullah ﷺ.

These particular five were from the fruits of Abu Bakr's *Da'wah*. Abu Bakr ﷺ invited them to Islam, they accepted his invitation, and then he took them, one at a time, to the Prophet ﷺ. Each one of them then formally announced his Islam in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ. Once these five brave men entered the fold of Islam, others began to follow.

As soon as he embraced Islam, Abu Bakr ؓ sprang into action with the passion of a fresh convert, yet, unlike many other converts throughout history, his passion and enthusiasm never died, and never even waned. Abu Bakr's Islam shows that a person of status and ranking in society often has more of an opportunity than others do of having a positive impact upon others.

From his Islam, one can also perceive an interesting transformation: Abu Bakr ؓ was always a close friend of the Prophet ﷺ, but prior to Islam, that friendship was based upon an affinity of character and personality; with the advent of Islam, their friendship was based only upon faith in Allah ﷻ.

6) The Second Wave Of Converts

After a select group of individuals embraced Islam at the hands of Abu Bakr ؓ, a second wave of people began to enter the fold of Islam. They were: Abu 'Ubaidah Al-Jarraah ؓ; Abu Salamah 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Asad ibn Makhzoom ibn Murrah ؓ, the Prophet's nursing brother, and the son of the Prophet's aunt; Barrah bint 'Abdul-Muttalib; Al-Arqam ibn Abee Al-Arqam Al-Makhzoomee ؓ; 'Uthmaan ibn Madh'oon Al-Jumhee ؓ; 'Ubaidah ibn Al-Haarith ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ; Sa'eed ibn Zaid ibn 'Amr ibn Nufail ؓ; Qudaamah ؓ and 'Abdullah ؓ, the two sons of Madh'oon; Faatimah bint Al-Khattaab ibn Nufail, sister of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ and wife of Sa'eed ibn Zaid ؓ; Asmaa bint Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ; 'Aishah bint Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ; and Khabbaab ibn Al-Arat ؓ, an ally of the Banu Zuhrah clan.

7) The Third Wave Of Converts

These are some of the people who embraced Islam among the third wave of converts: 'Umair ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ, brother of Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ; 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ؓ; Mas'ood ibn Al-Qaaree ؓ, and he is otherwise known as Mas'ood ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Amr; Saleet ibn 'Amr ؓ and his brother, Haatib ibn 'Amr ؓ; 'Ayyaash ibn Abee Rabee'ah ؓ and his wife, Asmaa bint Salaamah ؓ; Khunais ibn Hudhaafah As-Sahmee ؓ; 'Aamir ibn

Rabee'ah ؓ, who was allied to the Al-Khattaab clan; 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ and his brother, Abu Ahmad ؓ; Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ and his wife, Asmaa bint 'Umais ؓ; Haatib ibn Al-Haarith ؓ, his wife, Faatimah bint Al-Mujallal ؓ, his brother Hattaab ibn Al-Haarith ؓ, Hattaab's wife Fuhaikah bint Yasaar ؓ – and the brother of Hattaab ؓ and Haatib ؓ, Ma'mar ibn Al-Haarith ؓ; As-Saaib ibn 'Uthmaan ibn Madh'oon ؓ; Al-Muttalib ibn Azhar ؓ and his wife, Ramlah bitn Abee 'Auf ؓ; An-Nahhaam ibn 'Abdullah ibn Usaid ؓ; 'Aamir ibn Fuhairah ؓ, the freed slave of Abu Bakr ؓ, as well as his mother and father, Fuhairah ؓ – 'Aamir ؓ was a slave of Tufail ibn Al-Haarith, and then Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ purchased him and set him free; Khaalid ibn Sa'eed ibn Al-'Aas ibn Umayyah ibn 'Abd Shams ibn 'Abd Manaaf ibn Qusai ؓ and his wife, Ameenah bitn Khalaf ؓ; Abu Hudhaifah ibn 'Utba ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Abd Shams ؓ; Waaqid ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd Manaaf ؓ; Khaalid ؓ, 'Aamir ؓ, 'Aaqil ؓ, and Iyaas ؓ – the sons of Al-Bukair ibn 'Abd Ya-Lail; 'Ammar ibn Yaasir ؓ, who was allied to the clan of Banu Makhzoom ibn Yaqadhah (which is why it was the leaders of that clan who persecuted and tortured 'Ammar ؓ); and Suhaib ibn Sinaan ؓ, who was the first Roman to embrace Islam. And Ibn Hishaam included 'Ansee ibn Madhhaj ؓ in this list.

Among the other early converts were Abu Dharr Al-Ghaffaaree ؓ, his brother Unais ؓ, and his mother ؓ. And Bilaal ibn Rabaah Al-Habashee ؓ was also among the early group of people who raced to embrace Islam. These early Muslims consisted of people from all of Quraish's different subtribes. According to Ibn Hishaam, they were a total of more than 40 people.^[1] Ibn Ishaq said, "Then (scattered) groups of men and women entered into the fold of Islam, until eventually, the word 'Islam' spread all over Makkah."^[2]

It is clear from the above-mentioned lists that the early converts to Islam consisted of the most prominent and respected members of

^[1] *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (1/245-262).

^[2] *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (1/262).

Quraish's society. They were certainly not – as the enemies of Islam would like us to believe – non-contributing members of society, people held in disrepute, or slaves who wanted to regain their freedom. In the early days of Islam, no one had anything worldly to gain by becoming a Muslim; all that fresh converts had to look forward to was torture, persecution – and reward from Allah ﷻ.

Some authors of *Seerah* books also got things wrong on this point; one such author wrote, "We learn from the *Seerah* that those who entered into the fold of Islam during this (early) stage were, for the most part, poor people, weak people, and slaves" Another example from the same source is as follows: "After three years of *Da'wah*, a total of 40 people (consisting of men and women) embraced Islam. Most of them were poor people, weak people, slaves, or freed-slaves. And prominent among them was a group of foreigners: Suhaib Ar-Roomee ؓ and Bilaal Al-Habashee ؓ." And Ibn Ar-Rabee' wrote in *Hadaaiq Al-Anwaar*: "Weak (in terms of finances and social status) men and women, as well as freed slaves – these were the people who believed in him (during the early days of his mission)."

But meticulous research reveals a totally different picture: the total number of poor people, weak people, freed slaves, slaves, and foreigners who embraced Islam during those early days – is 13. If only 13 of approximately 40 Muslims were from the aforementioned categories, it is very wrong to say, "Most of them were poor" or, "For the most part, they were poor."

In the early days of the Prophet's mission, people embraced Islam not because they desired worldly profit, but because Allah ﷻ had opened their hearts to the truth, a fact that holds true for free men and slaves, for the rich and the poor. Abu Bakr ؓ, a rich and respected member of Quraish society; Bilaal ؓ, a slave from Abyssinia; 'Uthmaan ؓ, also rich and respected; and Suhaib ؓ, a foreigner from Rome – each of these embraced Islam for the exact same reason: Faith in the truth.

Professor Saalaih Ash-Shamee said, "We do not want to deny the

existence of Muslims who were poor or who were slaves during those early days of Islam, but we do deny that they were in the majority, for established historical facts tell us otherwise. Had they been in the majority, their efforts would have resulted in a class struggle – the poor and weak pitted against the rich and strong. But thoughts of a class struggle were not on the minds of any Muslim. As a community, they considered one another to be brothers, all slaves of Allah ﷻ, regardless of whether they were rich or poor. Actually, most of the Prophet's followers during the early days of Islam were from the upper echelons of society, a fact that attests to the strength and power of the message they had accepted. In order to uphold their beliefs, they were willing to endure persecution and torture at the hands of their people, treatment they had never previously thought of, never mind experienced."

Islam flowed into pure hearts and good souls, without distinguishing between rich and poor, black and white, male and female, or slave and free man. Khadeejah ﷺ, Abu Bakr ﷺ, 'Alee ﷺ, 'Uthmaan ﷺ, Az-Zubair ﷺ, 'Abdur-Rahmaan ﷺ, Talhah ﷺ, Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ, Abu Salamah ﷺ, Al-Arqam ﷺ, 'Uthmaan ibn Madh'oon ﷺ, Sa'eed ibn Zaid ﷺ, 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ﷺ, Ja'far ﷺ, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ, Faatimah bint Al-Khattaab ﷺ, Khaalid ibn Sa'eed ﷺ, and Abu Hudhaifah ibn 'Utbah ﷺ – these and others like them were from the noble, upper classes of the Quraish, and they were also some of the earliest Muslims, those who raced to *Eemaan* (faith) and to believing in the message of Muhammad ﷺ.

The Messenger Of Allah ﷺ **Continues His *Da'wah* Efforts**

The Prophet ﷺ continued his secret calling, managing to draw followers from his family and circle of friends. These early Muslims also secretly preached to people they trusted. This early stage of the *Da'wah* was fraught with difficulties and hardships. For one thing, they had to be very careful to invite only those people they trusted and were not likely to cause problems. As such, the *Da'wah* efforts

proceeded as a succession of slow, careful steps. Also, given the secrecy that was required of them, Muslims had a hard time applying their religion, both in terms of learning it from the Prophet ﷺ – since planning secret meetings was not a simple matter – and of applying what they learnt from the Prophet ﷺ. Prayer, for example, was obligatory upon every person who entered the fold of Islam. But at this stage, no one was supposed to pray within eyeshot or recite the Qur'an within earshot of any disbelieving member of the Quraish. Therefore, when they wanted to pray, Muslims had to secretly make their way to the valleys and mountain passes that were adjacent to Makkah.

1) A Sense Of Security

In the early days of Islam, secrecy was a must in order to ensure the security and safety of the small Muslim population. Even the closest of relatives – unless they were very trustworthy and very likely to embrace Islam – were to be left in the dark; in short, the command for secrecy was at once clear and emphatic. The Muslims were partnered up into small groups, so that, for example, two poor people would remain in the company of one rich nobleman. He would share his food with them, and whoever among them had memorized something from the Qur'an would teach the others. People were joined up in small groups both to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood between them and to establish group study sessions among them. During this period, the Prophet ﷺ commanded them to adhere to secrecy not because he ﷺ feared that they were cowards, but because he ﷺ was preparing them for the next stage of the *Da'wah*.

Certain measures must always be taken in order to ensure the security and safety of the individual members of a community, a meaning that is alluded to in the following Verse (which was revealed during the Makkan phase of the Prophet's biography):

﴿يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قَاتِلُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُكْفَرُوْنَ ۙ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُمْ شَاۡيَۃٌ ۙ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوْا ۚ اِنَّكُمْ اِنْتُمْ ۙ لَا يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُوْنَ ۙ﴾ (٨٧)

"O my sons! Go you and enquire about Yousuf (Joseph) and his brother, and never give up hope of Allah's Mercy. Certainly no one despairs of Allah's Mercy, except the people who disbelieve."
(Qur'an 12: 87)

Here, Ya'qoob عليه السلام requests his sons to search out for and make enquiries about Yousuf عليه السلام and his brother; so we have an example of a Prophet عليه السلام legitimizing the practice of gathering information. The connection I am making here is that gathering information is an important part of ensuring the security of a given community, which is why I am certain that the Companions gathered information – during the phase of secret calling – about the people they wanted to invite to Islam.

Let us consider another Verse that was revealed during the Makkan phase of the Prophet's *Seerah*:

﴿وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِ عَنْ جُنُبٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ
۝۱۱ وَحَرَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ
لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَمْ نَحْكُمُوهَا ۖ﴾ (١٢)

"And she said to his [Moosa's (Moses)] sister: "Follow him." So she (his sister) watched him from a far place secretly, while they perceived not. And We had already forbidden (other) foster suckling mothers for him, until she (his sister came up and) said: "Shall I direct you to a household who will rear him for you, and sincerely they will look after him in a good manner?" (Qur'an 28: 11, 12)

We learn from these two Verses the following points:

- 1) Like Ya'qoob عليه السلام, Moosa's mother relied on the gathering of information to ensure the safety of her son: "And she said to his (Moosa's) sister: Follow him." The Arabic word for 'follow' in this Verse is *Qass*, a word that implies the meaning of both 'following' and 'the gathering of information.'
- 2) She عليها السلام relied on a source whose motives were the same as hers – the preservation and safety of Moosa عليه السلام; this was to ensure the reliability of the information that would be gathered for

her. Moosa's sister went willingly and eagerly to find out about her brother. This shows that the person who is sent to gather information should be reliable and, if possible, one who has the same motives as the person who sends him.

- 3) Moosa's sister was instructed to be cautious and to avoid being seen, for the word *Qass* also implies following someone stealthily, without attracting anyone's attention. This is why she "watched him from a far place secretly, while they perceived not."
- 4) Moosa's sister didn't simply gather information, for upon seeing Moosa ﷺ, she could have returned to her mother and informed her about Moosa's whereabouts, which is all that was required of her. She took the further step of trying to achieve their goal: the return of Moosa ﷺ to his mother. And in this attempt, she achieved complete success.

We must remember that these Verses were revealed before the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah, during a period wherein safety and security were major issues for the Companions ﷺ, who were constantly under the threat of persecution, torture, and even death.

In Makkah, before the Prophet's *Hijrah* (migration), and in Al-Madeenah, after the establishment of a Muslim country, the Prophet ﷺ constantly strove to ensure the safety of his followers. This is a lesson that Muslims leaders desperately need to learn today; they need to take all necessary measures – both in terms of intelligence and military planning – to protect their citizens from outside enemy forces. However, the measures taken need to be founded upon the teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, and the people who work in this field for Muslim governments should be practicing Muslims and exemplary role models for the Muslim masses.

Let us consider an example of how, during the early days of Islam, the Prophet ﷺ organized the Muslims into small groups that would secretly meet. Faatimah bint Al-Khattaab ؓ and her

husband, Sa'eed ibn Zaid ؓ, were in the same group as Nu'aim ibn 'Abdullah An-Nahhaam ibn 'Adee ؓ. And their appointed teacher was Khabbaab ibn Al-Arat ؓ. When they met, their main concern was not simply to learn how to recite the Qur'an, but also to actually study the Qur'an, understand its Verses, learn its commands and prohibitions, and apply its teachings.

The Prophet ﷺ would plan things out with care and foresight, considering the consequences of every decision. He knew all too well that the day was not far off when he ﷺ would be ordered to perform *Da'wah* openly and that phase of the *Da'wah* was going to be fraught with obstacles. Also, he ﷺ was noticing that, with more and more people entering into the fold of Islam, Khadeejah's house was becoming too small to serve as a meeting place. And as a leader, he ﷺ needed to meet with his followers in a place that was at once inconspicuous and sufficiently spacious. He ﷺ therefore decided to choose Al-Arqam ibn Abee Arqam's house as the secret meeting place of the Muslims. A meeting place was definitely needed since frequent meetings between the Prophet ﷺ and his followers ؓ and was best way of educating Muslims and training them to be leaders and preachers for the upcoming phases of the *Da'wah*.

It is clear that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was preparing his followers to be bearers of the message of Islam and future leaders of the Muslim nation. Had the Prophet ﷺ been thinking only of conveying the truth without any concern for the future of his nation, he ﷺ would not have conducted the early phase of his mission with so much secrecy and caution. The best place to convey his message was the Ka'bah, where the Quraish were frequently gathered. But the Prophet ﷺ chose complete secrecy; he ﷺ chose to meet at an undisclosed location, where he ﷺ could teach his followers the Qur'an and where he could prepare them for the difficulties that lay ahead of them.

2) The House Of Al-Arqam Ibn Abee Al-Arqam

It is mentioned in books of *Seerah* that the house of Al-Arqam was

chosen as the secret meeting place of the Muslims after Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ became involved in the first ever skirmish between a Muslim and polytheists. Ibn Ishaq said, "When they would pray, the Companions ؓ of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would go to the mountain passes (that were close to Makkah); in this manner they were able to keep their prayers a secret from their people. Once, while Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ was among a group of the Messenger of Allah's Companions in one of the mountain passes of Makkah, a number of polytheists passed by them while they were praying. The polytheists came upon them and censured them for what they were doing, until they ended up fighting them. On that day, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ struck a man from the polytheists with the leg-bone of a camel; (with this blow) he broke (one of) the man's (bones). That was the first time in Islam that blood was spilled."^[1]

As a central meeting place for the Muslims, the house of Al-Arqam was where Muslims would hear newly revealed Verses from the Prophet ﷺ; it was where the Prophet ﷺ reminded them about Allah ﷻ, where he ﷺ would train them under his direct supervision, and where they would inform him about their problems.

Some Of The Main Qualities And Merits Of The First Generation Of Muslims

It was none other than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who trained the first generation of Muslims. Those Muslims, due to specific qualities that Allah ﷻ blessed them with, developed Islamic characteristics at the levels of the individual, the family, and society; as a result, they formed the foundations of an Islamic country and a wonderful Islamic civilization. Here are the main qualities that distinguish them from Muslims of later generations; a few aspects of these qualities we cannot assimilate, because they revolve around the fact that the Companions ؓ were learning

^[1] *Ibn Hishaam* (1/236)

directly from the Prophet ﷺ; but the rest, we can and must assimilate, if we are to regain the prominence and success that Muslims once enjoyed.

1) They ﷺ completely submitted to and obeyed the revelation that came down to the Prophet ﷺ

Correct knowledge and correct understanding – in matters that pertain to beliefs, legislations, manners, and so on – can only be gained through revelation: the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. The knowledge we acquire from these sources of revelation covers everything: knowledge about Allah ﷻ, His Names, His attributes, and His actions; about what rights He ﷻ has over us, and about what descriptions are unbefitting of His greatness and perfection; about Angels, the Books (i.e., revealed books), the Prophets, the Hereafter, Paradise, and Hellfire; about legislations, both of the general and of the detailed kinds; about rulings that have to do with our duties as human beings; about how to act in different situations – when angry or happy, when poor or rich, when safe or in danger, when all is well or not well; and about how to adhere to valid Islamic proofs. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ﴾ (٨١)

“And of those whom We have created, there is a community who guides (others) with the truth, and establishes justice therewith.”
(Qur'an 7: 181)

There are a number of reasons why the Companions ﷺ were better able to submit to and apply Islamic proofs; here are some of those reasons:

- a) Their hearts were pure and free from desires – through a process of purification and training – that conflict with the teachings of Islam. Without the slightest degree of uncertainty, they were completely prepared and willing to submit to and accept all that that came from Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ.
- b) They ﷺ were alive when revelation was descending to the

Prophet ﷺ, and they were his Companions ﷺ. And so they were more knowledgeable than anyone else about the events that prompted commentary or instruction – from either Verses of the Qur'an or sayings of the Prophet ﷺ. That knowledge obviously enabled them to have a deep understanding of revelation.

- c) It was very often the case that Verses of the Qur'an were revealed for reasons that had to do with the Prophet's Companions ﷺ – with an individual among them in particular, or with them as a group. Since the Qur'an was addressing them directly, and since revealed Verses were presenting solutions to real problems, the Qur'an had a profoundly deep and positive effect on them: They were always ready to receive a command and then to obey it and put it into action.
- d) Because of their proximity and direct access to the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ were exempt from the difficulties involved with distinguishing between authentic and false narrations, difficulties that Muslims from all later generations had to face. So for the most part, the Companions ﷺ did not need to pay attention to such matters as the chain of a narration, the acceptability of individual narrators, or the hidden defects that can be found in some narrations. They therefore had no problem in distinguishing between authentic reports and weak reports; later generations, on the other hand, needed to rely on scholarly research, so that many ignorant people who did not have the combined knowledge of chains of narrators and meanings of narrations – or who did not rely on scholars who had that knowledge – deviated from correct guidance. The era of the Companions ﷺ was replete with trustworthy individuals; furthermore, the Companions ﷺ were able to go directly to the Prophet ﷺ for knowledge. The situation was such that, if people heard someone say, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said (such and such)," they would, as Ibn 'Abbaas ﷺ described, race to fix their gazes upon him (in order to concentrate on what he was about to convey).

2) A Deep Spiritual Awakening That Resulted From Revelation And *Eemaan* (Faith)

The Companions ؓ did not treat Islamic knowledge as if it were a series of facts that are pertinent exclusively to the sphere of the mind, but have nothing to do with the heart or with actions. As a result of acquiring knowledge about Allah ﷻ, His Names, His attributes, and His actions, the Prophet's Companions ؓ loved Allah ﷻ; worshipped Him; longed not only to meet Him, but also to enjoy looking at His Noble Countenance; glorified Him; feared Him; strove hard to avoid doing those things that would bring upon them His wrath and punishment; hoped for reward from Him – for Paradise and His Good Pleasure; and cherished good thoughts about Him. Hence they embodied the positive effects of having knowledge of and faith in Allah ﷻ: love, fear, and hope. Their knowledge about Paradise and Hellfire made them long for the eternal bliss of the former and for exemption from having to spend any time at all in the latter. And so their hearts wavered between two states: hope for eternal bliss and fear of punishment in the Hereafter; thus it was that their hearts become attached to the Hereafter – so much so that it was as if they were looking with their very own eyes at the events of the Resurrection, of the scale, of the bridge (i.e., the one that is over the Hellfire, which every person must cross over; some will fall down, and others will make it to the other side), of Paradise, and of the Hellfire. Their knowledge of *Al-Qadr* (Divine Preordainment), of how everything that happens in this world has already been decreed by Allah ﷻ, had the effect of making them place their complete faith in Allah ﷻ and not in material causes. As a result of their faith in *Al-Qadr*, they did not become overly happy for the things they had, nor did they become overly sad for what was withheld from them; also, they strove to earn lawful sustenance, knowing fully well that a person will not miss out on that which was decreed for him, nor will he get that which was not decreed for him. Furthermore, faith in *Al-Qadr* instilled bravery into their souls. With their knowledge of the imminence and inevitability of

death and what comes after death, the Companions ﷺ turned away from the world and directed their energies to earning rewards in the Hereafter through the performance of good deeds. These deeply spiritual and physical manifestations are the true and greater purposes behind the acquisition of knowledge: if they are missing in one's life, then one's knowledge is actually harmful to one, both in the short term and in the long run.

Of all human beings, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ had the greatest share of the above-mentioned qualities. Their faith, which they took directly from the Prophet ﷺ, was deeper and more complete than the faith of all who came after them. During the day, they were brave fighters; and during the night, they worshipped more assiduously than monks. Their knowledge, their faith in the truth, and their fear of Allah ﷻ – none of these prevented them from seeing to their worldly affairs. They bought, sold, planted, harvested, married, took care of their families, and even helped the needy. As complete as they were in all regards, they were not even remotely near to becoming impressed by their own feats, a disease that has afflicted many worshippers from later generations. Those afflicted with this disease hold in low esteem the deeds and sacrifices of others, all the while raising themselves upon pedestals, thinking that no one is more pious than them and that no one can outdo them in performing good deeds. In themselves, they see all that is good; and in others, they see all that is evil. It is in this manner that they have deviated from the way of Prophet's Companions ﷺ.

The Personality Of The Prophet ﷺ

The house of Al-Arqam ibn Abee Arqam was the greatest institution of higher learning that mankind has ever known; how can this not be so, when its teacher was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the teacher of all of mankind. Upon graduation, the students of that school served humanity by helping to free people from the shackles of servitude to all created beings and by doing their part to bring people out from the darkness of disbelief and into the light of *Eemaan* (faith).

The graduates of the house of Al-Arqam became great men in their own right, for even after the Prophet's death, they continued, with an inexhaustible supply of energy, to spread the message of Truth to all of mankind. So great were the graduates of that school that no one from the 14 centuries that followed them equaled a single one of the likes of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ, 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan ؓ, 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ, and so on.

In less than one half of a century, the singularly superior men that the Prophet ﷺ educated were blessed with many great victories as they carried the message of *Tawheed* (Islamic Monotheism) all over the world. In the early years of his Prophethood, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wisely chose and trained the key people that would be needed to lead the Muslim nation through its glorious first century of being. It is with that end in mind – the spread of Islam all over Arabia and to many parts of the world – that we can truly appreciate the early days of education and training in the house of Al-Arqam.

What effect did the Prophet's personality have on his Companions ؓ? The moment one of them met him in the house of Al-Arqam was the moment in which one underwent a tremendous spiritual change. Coming out of darkness and into light, gaining faith and discarding disbelief, those early believers became ready and spiritually strong enough to bear all of the hardships that came with struggling in the way of their new faith.

The Prophet ﷺ had a truly magnetic personality. Great men are typically loved and surrounded by a group of admirers. But the Prophet ﷺ was more than just a great man: He ﷺ was the Messenger of Allah ﷻ, it was to him that revelation descended from Allah ﷻ, and it was his duty to spread the message of truth to all of mankind. Believers loved him not solely for his person, as great people are often loved, but also for the fact that he was, as a receiver of revelation, their direct link to their Lord. And so the Prophet ﷺ was at once a great man and a great Messenger ﷺ; in the end, both qualities are so intertwined in the same person, that

it all amounts to the same thing: One can have a deep love for the Messenger ﷺ, the man; or for the man, the Messenger ﷺ. In the heart of a believer, love for Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ becomes the motive for all feelings and actions. It was such a love that permeated the hearts of the first generation of Muslims ﷺ.

The Subject Of Study In The House Of Al-Arqam

The subject of study that the Prophet ﷺ undertook to teach in the house of Al-Arqam was the Noble Qur'an. The Prophet ﷺ strove hard to make the Qur'an the sole source of knowledge for his Companions ﷺ – the source that provided the main principles of thought needed by the individual Muslim, the Muslim family, and the Muslim society.

The Verses were freshly being revealed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and his Companions ﷺ would directly hear him reciting them. As such, the Verses were, so to speak, being poured into their hearts, thus penetrating the inner recesses of their souls. Their hearts and souls found a strong attachment to the Qur'an, so that each one of them turned into a new human being, in terms of his values, emotions, goals, manners – and overall outlook on life. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ strove to make the Qur'an the sole source of study and to not mix anything else with it. True, the subject of study in the house of Al-Arqam was, as I stated earlier, the Noble Qur'an, but of course it was also the guidance and teachings of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The Companions ﷺ made every effort to study the Qur'an; they did their utmost to both understand and apply the Verses they were learning. In each Verse, they searched out for any guidance that they could apply either inwardly or outwardly.

Based on all of the above-mentioned reasons, the first generation of Islam represented a practical application of the teachings of Islam. The Qur'an was for them a divine school, and they were its graduates, who became leaders and examples for others to follow. No generation before them as well as no generation after them comes even close to their level. To establish a nation and a

country, to lay down the foundations of belief, to instill good manners into people, to educate and raise the hearts and minds of people – for these and other similar reasons, Allah ﷻ revealed the Qur'an to the heart of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The first generation of Islam, which was the beneficiary of the Prophet's direct, personal guidance, is unequalled in terms of its achievements – both of the spiritual and material kind.

Why The House Of Al-Arqam?

The decision to choose Al-Arqam's house was certainly not an arbitrary one; to the contrary, there are a few factors that, in a strategic sense, made Al-Arqam's house an ideal place for the Muslims to conduct secret meetings:

- 1) Al-Arqam ؓ did not openly declare his Islam, so it was highly unlikely that anyone would think that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ؓ were meeting one another in his house.
- 2) Al-Arqam ibn Abee Al-Arqam ؓ was from the Banu Makhzoom clan, the same clan that carried the flag of war (or enmity) against the Banu Haashim clan (of which the Prophet ﷺ was a member). Even if one suspected Al-Arqam ؓ of being a Muslim, one would still not think that the Muslims secretly met in Al-Arqam's house, for since all neighbouring houses belonged to other members of the Banu Makhzoom clan, it would mean that the Muslims were meeting in the middle of enemy territory. Any polytheist in Makkah would probably have thought this to be a highly unlikely scenario, which makes the choice of Al-Arqam's house all the more wise and intelligent.
- 3) When he embraced Islam, Al-Arqam ibn Abee Al-Arqam ؓ was merely an adolescent, being approximately 16 years of age. If the leaders of the Quraish did ever think about trying to discover the location of the Muslims' secret meeting place, it would not have crossed their minds to search the houses of adolescent followers of the Prophet ﷺ; rather, their gazes

would have been fixed on the Prophet's house or on the houses of his older and more prominent followers – such as Abu Bakr ؓ. Otherwise, they might have suspected that the Muslims met in one of the houses of the Banu Haashim clan. Because of these reasons, it is clear that, in terms of maintaining security, choosing Al-Arqam's house was a profoundly wise decision – which turned out to be a correct decision, for it is not related in any book (at least in any book that I have come across) that the Quraish ever found out where exactly it was that the Muslims gathered together to learn their religion.

Some Of The Qualities Of The Prophet's Early Companions ؓ

The first phase of the Prophet's *Da'wah* relied on secrecy and individual striving. And in the house of Al-Arqam, the Prophet ﷺ met with his followers not only to advise them and preach to them, but also to teach them, train them, and prepare them to become leaders and preachers. It was as if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ specified certain duties for each Companion ؓ, so that each one knew what his role was in helping to spread Islam.

During the entire Makkan phase of the Prophet's life, the development of a Muslim society proceeded in slow, cautious, and gradual steps. The main theme of this phase is exemplified in the saying of Allah ﷻ:

﴿وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدْوَةِ وَالْعَنَىٰ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ
وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدَ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا نَضَعُ مَانَآءَ لِقَبْلِهِمْ عَنْ
ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ۝ ٢٨﴾

“And keep yourself (O Muhammad ﷺ) patiently with those who call on their Lord (i.e., your companions who remember their Lord with glorification, praising in prayers, etc., and other righteous deeds, etc.) morning and afternoon, seeking His Face, and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter

of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, one who follows his own lusts and whose affair (deeds) has been lost.” (Qur’an 18: 28)

In this Verse, the Prophet ﷺ was being ordered to be patient with the shortcomings and mistakes of those who answered his call – to be particularly patient with their questions, especially if those questions were wrong and should not have been asked; and also to be patient when they hesitated to implement certain instructions. He ﷺ was also being commanded to try his utmost to instill patience into his followers, patience they needed when they received harsh treatment from their people. Furthermore, he ﷺ was being instructed to clarify to his followers the natural concomitants of conveying the truth to others: ill treatment and hardships. The above-mentioned Verse, which is from *Sooratul-Kahf*, describes some of the qualities of the first generation of Muslims, the most important of which are as follows:

1) Patience: “And Keep Yourself Patiently With Those...”

The word *As-Sabr*, or patience, is repeated frequently both in the Qur’an and in the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ. Muslims are required not only to be patient themselves, but also to advise others to be patient. Patience is of such paramount importance in Islam that it is one of the four qualities of those who are saved from being in a state of loss:

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ ۝١ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكُفْرٍ ۝٢ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ۝٣ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝٤﴾

“By Al-‘Asr (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e., order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma’roof) which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may

encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihaad, etc.)." (Qur'an 103: 1-3)

In this Chapter of the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ informs us that all human beings are in a state of loss, except for those who,

- 1) Believe in Allah.
- 2) Perform good deeds.
- 3) Recommend one another to the truth.
- 4) Recommend one another to patience.

Therefore, a person must not only rectify his own situation, but also must also work for the betterment of others. He rectifies his own situation by having faith and performing good deeds. He works for the betterment of others by sincerely advising others to follow the teachings of Islam and, in doing so, to be patient. When a person incorporates the four above-mentioned qualities into his character, he has fulfilled the rights of Allah ﷻ and the rights of people.

Patience is mentioned last in the above-mentioned Chapter, and for a very good reason. When one believes in Allah ﷻ, performs good deeds, and advises others to follow the truth, one will be faced with many hardships and tests, all of which require patience – patience to struggle against one's own self, to struggle against others, and to endure the vicissitudes of life.

2) Frequently supplicating to Allah ﷻ

This quality is clearly referred to in the saying of Allah ﷻ:

"With those who call on their Lord (i.e., your companions who remember their Lord with glorification, praising in prayers, etc., and other righteous deeds, etc.) morning and afternoon."
(Qur'an 18: 28)

Supplication, or *Du'a*, is indeed a great matter. When one supplicates frequently and with sincerity, many blessings are showered down upon him. One of the most important of factors

that lead to success is having a good relation with Allah ﷻ by frequently invoking for His help and guidance.

3) Sincerity

In the very same Verse, Allah ﷻ informs us about the sincerity of the Prophet's Companions ؓ, saying that they invoke their Lord, morning and night, "seeking His face." Sayings, deeds, *Jihaad* – one must do all of these for Allah ﷻ only, seeking His pleasure only, hoping for His reward alone, and not for any worldly profit, status, or advancement.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ۚ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Verily, my Salaat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims." (Qur'an 6: 162, 163)

Sincerity, it must be remembered, is a prerequisite for having one's deeds accepted. For one's deed to be accepted, one must perform it sincerely for Allah ﷻ, and – this is the second prerequisite – one must perform it in accordance with the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

4) Steadfastness and Firmness upon the Truth

This quality is alluded to in the same Verse:

﴿وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا﴾

"And let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world." (Qur'an 18: 28)

The steadfastness alluded to in this Verse is part of an overall steadfastness by which a Muslim should be distinguished. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ
وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا﴾ (٢٣)

“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah [i.e., they have gone out for Jihaad (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers], of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e., have been martyred), and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed (i.e., they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah) in the least.” (Qur’an 33: 23)

This Verse contains the mention of three qualities: Faith, in, ‘the believers’; manliness, in, ‘are men’ (the word *Rijaal* is used, and it means ‘men,’ as opposed to *Dhukoor*, which means males); and truthfulness, in, ‘who have been true to their covenant with Allah ﷻ.’ In order to remain steadfast upon the truth, one should possess these three qualities. Faith inspires one to hold on to high values and to make significant sacrifices for the sake of one’s principles and beliefs. Manliness induces one to go after one’s goals, without taking notice of trifling people and trifling matters. And truthfulness helps prevent the occurrence of degeneration in one’s character. If one has all of the three above-mentioned qualities, then it matters not if one sees the hangman’s rope, the shiny part of a sword’s blade perched over one’s neck, worldly profit, or an enticingly beautiful woman, for he will, by the permission of Allah ﷻ, remain steadfast upon the truth.

These were, if not all, then at least the most important of the qualities that the first generation of Muslims possessed.

The Spreading Of The *Da’wah* Among The Subtribes Of The Quraish, And The Universality Of Islam’s Message

During the secret phase of the Prophet’s *Da’wah*, Islam spread rather evenly among the various clans of the Quraish, with no single clan having a predominantly large number of converts. This phenomenon was certainly contrary to the nature of tribal

life during those times. Since Islam was not universally accepted by all of the members of any given clan, Muslims did not have a source of protection, which would have come from tribal loyalty had all the members of a single clan embraced Islam. But on the other hand, had all of the Muslims been from a single clan, all of the other clans would have joined forces to attack that clan. As the matter stood, Islam spread throughout all of Quraish's clans, without any of the adverse effects that result from tribal loyalty. Consider that Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ was from the Taim clan; 'Uthmaan ؓ, from Banu Umayyah; Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awwaam ؓ, from Banu Asad; Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ؓ, from Banu 'Abd-ad-Daar; 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ, from Banu Haashim; 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn 'Auf ؓ, from Banu Zuhrah; Sa'eed ibn Zaid ؓ, from Banu 'Adee; and 'Uthmaan ibn Madh'oon, from Jumah. In fact, during the early stages of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, a number of Muslims weren't even from the Quraish. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ؓ was from the Hudhail tribe; 'Utbah ibn Ghazwaan ؓ, from Maazin; 'Abdullah ibn Qais ؓ, from Al-Ash'ariyyeen; 'Ammaar ibn Yaasir ؓ, from 'Ans, which was from Madhij; Zaid ibn Haarith ؓ, from Kalb; At-Tufail ibn 'Amr ؓ, from Daus; 'Amr ibn 'Abasah ؓ, from Saleem; and Suhaib An-Namaree, from Banu An-Namir ibn Qaasit. It is clear, therefore, that Islam was not limited to Makkah.

All of the steps the Prophet ﷺ took during the secret phase of his mission – in terms of taking safety precautions, educating his followers, and training them – was in preparation for the next phase, when Islam was going to be openly preached to the people. Islam was not intended to remain a secret; rather, the message of Islam was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ in order to establish proof upon mankind and to save whomsoever Allah ﷻ wills from the darkness of ignorance and disbelief. From the very early stages of Muhammad's Prophethood, Allah ﷻ made clear the scope of his mission. Both of the following Verses, which speak of the universality of Islam's message, were revealed in Makkah, before the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah:

﴿إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ﴾ (٨٧)

"It (this Qur'an) is only a Reminder for all the 'Alamin (mankind and jinns)." (Qur'an 38: 87)

﴿وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

"But it is nothing else than a Reminder to all the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists)." (Qur'an 68: 52)

Yes, the message of Islam was addressed to all of mankind, which meant that openness and public declarations were required; consequently, Muslims had to face the effects of such openness: mainly, being persecuted by those who disbelieved. The secrecy that shrouded the Prophet's *Da'wah* during its early stages was an exceptional occurrence, which was prompted by extenuating conditions – mainly, that the Muslims were weak and few in number.

Just as secrecy is required in certain situations – such as during war – it is also at times required when conveying the message of Islam to others. But when should Muslims adhere to secrecy in this regard? Well, it is a matter of judgment: one should look at the overall situation and then do what will reap the best results. Even if one feels that secrecy is necessary due to a given set of circumstances, one must not keep the truth hidden; rather, one may keep hidden only that which does not hinder the spread of the message of Islam. For example, one can, without having any negative impact on the *Da'wah*, keep hidden the number of Muslims and their identities. So long as the message of Islam is being conveyed, certain things can, if deemed necessary, be kept hidden from others. Consider how, even after the Prophet ﷺ began to openly convey the message of Islam to others, he continued to conceal many things that had no impact on his conveying the message – such as the number of his followers, where he met with them, and the plans they had made to deal with the plots of the polytheists.

Laying The Foundations For Islamic Beliefs During The Makkan Era

The Prophet's Profound Understanding In Dealing With Universal Laws

The ways in which nations are established, the ways in which nations prosper and grow, and even the ways in which nations eventually collapse – these are all governed by universal laws. When one reflects on the biography of the Prophet ﷺ, one becomes truly amazed to see just how well the Prophet ﷺ understood those laws, and how wisely he used them for the advantage of Islam.

What are these universal laws that I am referring to? They are the established laws of Allah ﷻ that apply to the universe and to mankind and that are applicable to all times and places. These universal laws are many indeed, but what concerns us from them in this book is any law that is closely related to the rise of nations.

Allah ﷻ, the Lord of all that exists, willed for the affairs of this religion to proceed forward based upon set laws and rules, and not upon exceptions. Perhaps this is so that no one from a later generation could come and say, "The first generation of Muslims were granted victory through miracles, and since the time of the Prophet's death, miracles have ceased to occur."

Anyone who is adequately acquainted with the Qur'an knows

that it is replete with the mention of Allah's laws for the universe and mankind, laws that do not change. Our attention is drawn to these laws so that we learn from them and act accordingly. The laws I am speaking of have, throughout the centuries, applied to peoples, countries, nations, and individuals; they are fixed laws that apply equally to the past and to the present. When Muslims study these laws and understand the reasoning behind them, they come to understand the wisdom behind what happens in the world, and they realize that, in order to succeed, they must live in accordance with those laws. In order to achieve success and stability, they will not depend on the mere fact that they are Muslims; they will also take the material steps that lead to success.

Nothing occurs randomly in the lives of human beings; everything occurs according to Allah's set laws, which neither change nor answer to the whims of human beings. It is Muslims who should best understand the set laws of their Lord ﷻ, laws that are made clear in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. Muslims must realize that success will not come to them in an arbitrary or random manner; it will only come to them when they learn how to live according to Allah's set laws.

Muslims must therefore make the effort to acquaint themselves with those laws and to then live in harmony with them. Professor Al-Bannah, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "Never clash with the laws of the universe, for they always overcome; instead, master those laws and use them, change the direction of their flow, use some of them to counter the effects of others – and then wait for the hour of help and victory, for it will not be far away from you."^[1] The conclusions reached by Professor Al-Bannah indicate the depth and insight of his knowledge of the Prophet's biography, of Islamic history, and of history in general.

Led by the Prophet ﷺ, the first generation of Islam submitted to the universal laws of Allah ﷻ. Some of these laws I have hitherto

^[1] *Risaalah Al-Mo'tamir Al-Khaamis.*, (pg. 127).

briefly discussed – such as the importance of sound leadership to the development of a civilization, the importance of an organized group of Muslims to combating falsehood, and to the importance of a sound methodology through which beliefs are learnt. One important universal law is that of gradual progression; it is one of the laws that Muslims must adhere to when they are striving to build a strong and stable nation.

What the law of gradual progression implies is that the road to advancement is long, especially during the era we live in, wherein ignorance and evil are firmly rooted among all peoples. To remove that ignorance and evil, we must proceed with the goal of achieving gradual progress.

The early stages of the Prophet's *Da'wah* are replete with examples of gradual progress. In the first phase of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, Muslims were chosen and trained; in the next phase, they struggled against and confronted the enemies of Islam; in the final phase, they were granted victory and stability. They could not have taken one giant leap and achieved all that they achieved at one go. To ask that of them would have resulted in outright failure.

These days, it is of utmost importance that Muslims understand the law of gradual progression, especially considering the fact that some people, some of whom are deeply involved in *Da'wah*, believe that success can be achieved overnight. Such people want to bring complete and immediate change to the Muslim nation – without looking at the results of their actions, without considering the reality of the situation that Muslims are in, and without making the preparations that are necessary for a real and stable change to come about.

On more than one occasion, Allah ﷻ has drawn our attention to the law of gradual progression. For example, Allah ﷻ created the heavens and the earth in six days, though He ﷻ was able to create them in a shorter amount of time than the blinking of the eye. We do not even need to look as far as the heavens; within our own selves, we can appreciate the stages we went through, from birth onwards, until we became full-grown adults.

Even in matters that pertain to Islamic legislation, one can sense a patently clear pattern of gradual progression, the most important purpose of which is to make matters easy for human beings. Prayer, fasting, *Zakaat* – each of these obligatory duties was legislated in stages, before reaching its final form.

If one delves into the study of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, one gains an appreciation of how Islam transformed the inhabitants of Arab lands in a slow and gradual manner. Today, if we want to establish a truly Islamic society, we must not be deceived into thinking that that goal can be achieved through the official decree of a ruler, king, or parliament. We can achieve that goal only through gradual progression: through preparing and changing the thinking of individuals, through inner transformation of individuals, and through gradual changes on a societal level. This is the methodology that the Prophet ﷺ followed to transform an ignorant society into an Islamic one. In the thirteen years of his Prophethood that he ﷺ spent in Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ concentrated on training a generation of believers, so that they would be prepared to bear the hardships of the *Da'wah*, the duty of *Jihaad*, and the responsibility of spreading Islam all over the world. And this is why the Makkan phase of the Prophet's life was not so much a phase of legislation as it was a phase of development and training.

The Sunnah Of Change, And Its Relation To Laying Down The Foundations Of Correct Beliefs

In regard to bringing about change on any level – individual, family, or societal – one of the most important of universal laws is the one that Allah ﷻ establishes in the following Verse:

﴿لَكُمْ مَعْقَبَتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَ لَهُ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ ۝۱۱﴾

"For each (person), there are angels in succession, before and behind him. They guard him by the Command of Allah. Verily!

Allah will not change the good condition of a people as long as they do not change their state of goodness themselves (by committing sins and by being ungrateful and disobedient to Allah). But when Allah wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning back of it, and they will find besides Him no protector." (Qur'an 13: 11)

The relation between this universal law and success for the Islamic nation is palpable and very clear. Based on the implications of this universal law, we cannot hope to improve the condition of the Muslim *Ummah* (nation) under prevailing conditions: Rather, we must change. We cannot continue as we are, unless we desire a perpetual state of humiliation, unless we are content to lag behind other nations.

When Islam first arrived in Makkah, it was faced by a harsh reality in Makkah itself, in the Arabian Peninsula, and in the world at large. Almost nothing conformed to the teachings of Islam; the world was engulfed in darkness. Imagine, therefore, the change that was required to bring people out of darkness and into light. Beliefs, outlooks, values, and political systems – all of these clashed with Islam; and they all had behind them centuries of established practice and the support of many influential people. And mind you, Islam did not come to change only beliefs, outlooks, values, customs, and manners; it also came to change political systems and societal laws. It wanted to remove despotic leaders and kings, and replace them with a leadership that ruled solely by the *Shariah* of Islam.

But change did come about, and what is more, that change can come about again. We must understand that what happened, happened according to universal laws, and not according to miracles. Whenever Muslims implement the same changes that were implemented during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, the Muslim nation will achieve, by the permission of Allah ﷻ, success and stability on earth.

Of course, the first change that the Prophet ﷺ worked on effecting was a change in the souls of human beings – the making of great

men. With these great men as his followers, the Prophet ﷺ then proceeded to effect the greatest change on a societal level that mankind has ever witnessed: People were taken from darkness and into light, from ignorance to knowledge, and from backwardness to positive advancement; hence the formation of the most beautiful civilization that mankind has ever known.

In bringing about a change in the beliefs, manners, and values of his Companions رضي الله عنهم, the Prophet ﷺ followed the methodology of the Qur'an. As a result, the entire world changed, beginning in Al-Madeenah, then in Makkah, then in the Arabian Peninsula, and then in the lands of Persia and Rome.

In the Makkan period of the Prophet's biography, the Prophet ﷺ worked mainly on bringing about a change in beliefs. The meanings of *Eemaan* were constantly being instilled into the hearts of the Companions رضي الله عنهم, such as in the following Verse:

﴿أَوَمَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾﴾

"Is he who was dead (without faith by ignorance and disbelief) and We gave him life (by knowledge and faith) and set for him a light (of belief) whereby he can walk amongst men, like him who is in the darkness (of disbelief, polytheism and hypocrisy) from which he can never come out? Thus it is made fair-seeming to the disbelievers that which they used to do." (Qur'an 6: 122)

Correcting The Beliefs Of The Companions رضي الله عنهم

Before the advent of Islam, people in Makkah had a very twisted and deficient view on Allah ﷻ; for example, they deviated from the truth in their understanding of His Names and attributes:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾﴾

"And (all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah, so call on Him by them, and leave the company of those who belie or deny (or utter impious speech against) His Names. They will be requited for what they used to do." (Qur'an 7: 180)

They denied some of Allah's attributes, and they called Him by names that were inappropriate to His perfection and that implied false meanings; furthermore, they ascribed defects to Him, claiming that He had needs and that He had a child. They claimed that the angels are the daughters of Allah ﷻ, and they made jinns partners to Him ﷻ:

﴿وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ وَخَرَقُوا لَهُم بَيْنَ وَبَيْنَ يَغِيرَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُبْحَنَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ﴾ ١٠٠

"Yet, they join the jinns as partners in worship with Allah, though He has created them (the jinns), and they attribute falsely without knowledge sons and daughters to Him. Be He Glorified and Exalted above (all) that they attribute to Him." (Qur'an 6: 100)

﴿وَجَعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ الْبَنَاتِ سُبْحَنَهُ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ﴾ ٥٧

"And they assign daughters unto Allah! – Glorified (and Exalted) be He above all that they associate with Him! –. And unto themselves what they desire." (Qur'an 16: 57)

The Qur'an came, therefore, to firmly fix correct beliefs into the hearts of believers and to clarify those correct beliefs to all of mankind. Islam quickly confirmed that Allah ﷻ is the sole Creator, Sustainer, and Master of all that exists (*Tawheed Ar-Ruboobiyyah*), that He ﷻ alone deserves to be worshipped (*Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah*), and that He ﷻ alone has the most Beautiful of Names and perfect attributes (*Tawheed Al-Asmaa Was-Sifaat*). Belief in Allah; in the Angels; in the Books; in the Prophets; in the Last Day; and in Divine Preordainment (*Al-Qadr*), both the good and bad of it – these were, in the early phases of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, instilled into the hearts of the believers.

The Verses of the Qur'an that were revealed in Makkah acquainted people with their Lord ﷻ, Who alone deserves to be worshipped. From the very outset of his mission, the Prophet ﷺ strove to give people a clear idea about their Lord and about His rights over them. In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ concentrated his efforts on teaching various aspects of 'Aqeedah (Islamic beliefs), among which are the following:

- 1) Allah ﷻ, Who is far above all defects, is described with qualities that denote complete perfection. He ﷻ, therefore, is One: He ﷻ has no partner, He ﷻ has no mate, and He ﷻ has no children.
- 2) Allah ﷻ is the Creator, Ruler, and Sustainer of all things:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشَىٰ اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ ۗ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

"Indeed your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days and then He Istawa (rose over) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His majesty). He brings then night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and (He created) the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His command. Surely, His is the creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)!" (Qur'an 7: 54)

- 3) Allah ﷻ is the source of all blessings, be they great or small apparent or hidden.

﴿وَمَا بِكُمْ مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْأَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾﴾

"And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah. Then, when harm touches you, unto Him you cry aloud for help." (Qur'an 16: 53)

- 4) Allah's knowledge is comprehensive of all things. Nothing is hidden from Allah ﷻ: nothing in the heavens or on earth, nothing that man shows or keeps secret in his breast.

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَنْزِلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا﴾ (١٢)

"It is Allah Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof (i.e., seven). His command descends between them (heavens and earth), that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah surrounds (comprehends) all things in (His) Knowledge." (Qur'an 65: 12)

- 5) By Allah's command, the angels record the deeds of men, in books that record both great and small matters. The book of each person will be spread open at an appointed time:

﴿مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ﴾ (١٨)

"Not a word does he (or she) utter, but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it)." (Qur'an 50: 18)

- 6) Allah ﷻ tests His slaves by imposing upon them that which is contrary to what they love and desire. In this manner, the mettle and make-up of each man is discerned. Some men remain pleased with Allah's Decree and command; they submit to Him both outwardly and inwardly; it is these who are worthy of all that is good. Others remain angry and unsatisfied; their reward is Allah's wrath.

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ﴾ (٢)

"Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deed. And He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving." (Qur'an 67: 2)

- 7) Allah ﷻ guides and helps those who depend on Him; seek His help; and submit, in all aspects of their lives, to His commands:

﴿إِنَّ وَلِيََّ اللَّهِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ﴾ (٩٦)

"Verily, my Wali (Protector, Supporter, and Helper, etc.) is

Allah Who has revealed the Book (the Qur'an), and He protects (supports and helps) the righteous." (Qur'an 7: 196)

- 8) That Allah's slaves worship Allah ﷻ without associating any partners with Him is His right over them:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ﴾ ٦٦

"Nay! But worship Allah (Alone and none else), and be among the grateful." (Qur'an 39: 66)

- 9) Allah ﷻ clarified the implications and meanings of *Tawheed* in the Noble Qur'an.

Many aspects of Islamic law – such as Ramadan fasting being obligatory – were legislated in Al-Madeenah. But it was from the very outset of the Prophet's mission that the Companions ﷺ were purified from *Shirk* (associating partners with Allah ﷻ in worship). They worshipped Allah ﷻ according to the implications and meanings of His names and attributes. The foundations of an Islamic society were not laid in Al-Madeenah, but at a much earlier point in time in Makkah, where the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ to worship Allah ﷻ alone, without associating any partner with Him ﷻ. In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ did as all the Prophets ﷺ did. Allah ﷻ said about Noah ﷺ:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ إِلَىٰ لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ٢٥ أَن لَا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ ٢٦ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمِ الْيُسْرِ﴾ ٢٦

"And indeed We sent Nooh (Noah) to his people (and he said): "I have come to you as a plain warner. That you worship none but Allah, surely, I fear for you the torment of a painful Day." (Qur'an 11: 25, 26)

He ﷻ said about Hood ﷺ:

﴿وَإِلَّا عَادِ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا قَالَ يَتَقَوَّمُوا عِبَادُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ ٥٠ إِن أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا مُفْتَرُونَ﴾ ٥٠

“And to ‘Ad (people We sent) their brother Hood. He said, “O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other Ilah (god) but Him. Certainly, you do nothing but invent (lies)!” (Qur’an 11: 50)

He ﷺ said about Salih ﷺ:

﴿وَالِىَ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا قَالَ يَتَقَوَّمُ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ هُوَ أَنشَأَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَاسْتَعْمَرَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ ثُمَّ تَوْبُوا إِلَيْهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي قَرِيبٌ مُجِيبٌ ﴿٦١﴾﴾

“And to Thamood (people, We sent) their brother Salih (Saaleh). He said: “O my people! Worship Allah, you have no other Ilah (god) but Him. He brought you forth from the earth and settled you therein, then ask forgiveness of Him and turn to Him in repentance. Certainly, my Lord is Near (to all by His knowledge), Responsive.” (Qur’an 11: 61)

He ﷺ said about Shu’aib ﷺ:

﴿وَالِىَ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا قَالَ يَتَقَوَّمُ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ وَلَا تَنْقُصُوا أَلْيَاسًا وَلَا مِيزَانًا إِنِّي أُرْسِلُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ وَإِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ مُّحِيطٍ ﴿٨٤﴾﴾

“And to the Madyan (Midian) people (We sent) their brother Shu’aib. He said: “O my people! Worship Allah, you have no other Ilah (god) but Him, and give not short measure or weight, I see you in prosperity; and verily I fear for you the torment of a Day encompassing.” (Qur’an 11: 84)

And concerning ‘Eesa ﷺ, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾﴾

“Truly! Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him (Alone). This is the Straight Path.” (Qur’an 3: 51)

In short, all of the Messengers ﷺ invited their people to *Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah* – to worship Allah ﷻ, without associating any partners with Him ﷻ, and to avoid the worship of false gods and idols:

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ ۚ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ ۚ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

"And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from Taghoot (all false deities, etc., i.e., do not worship Taghoots besides Allah)." Then of them were some whom Allah guided and of them were some upon whom the straying was justified. So travel through the land and see what was the end of those who denied (the truth)." (Qur'an 16: 36)

And the Prophet ﷺ was a live example of a Muwahhid (one who worships Allah ﷻ alone, without associating any partner with Him in worship):

﴿قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَيْتَنِي رَبِّيَ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا مِّلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ۚ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾ قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أُبَدِّعُ رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا وَلَا نُزِرُ وَأَنْزَرُ ۚ وَذُرْ أُخْرَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا رُجُومٌ ۚ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْلَفُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Truly, my Lord has guided me to a Straight Path, a right religion, the religion of Ibraaheem (Abraham), Hanifa [i.e., the true Islamic Monotheism – to believe in One God (Allah, i.e., to worship none but Allah, Alone)] and he was not of the Al-Mushrikoon (polytheists, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, etc.)." Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Verily, my Salaat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims." Say: "Shall I seek a lord other than Allah, while He is the Lord of all things? No person earns any (sin) except against himself

(only), ad no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another. Then unto your Lord is your return, so He will tell you that wherein you have been differing.” (Qur’an 6: 161-164)

The Prophet’s training of his Companions ﷺ yielded blessed fruits: They became purified from everything that conflicts with *Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah*, *Tawheed Ar-Ruboobiyyah*, and *Tawheed Al-Asmaa Was-Sifaat*. And so they turned to Allah ﷻ alone for judgment in all matters; they obeyed none save Allah ﷻ; if following a person meant disobeying Allah ﷻ, they wouldn’t follow that person, regardless of who he was; they loved no one as much as they loved Allah ﷻ; they feared none but Allah ﷻ; they depended upon Allah ﷻ alone; they sought refuge only with Allah ﷻ; they invoked Allah ﷻ alone for help and for forgiveness; when they slaughtered an animal, they did so only for Allah ﷻ (by mentioning His Name); and when they took an oath, they did so only by Allah’s Name. They sought help from Allah ﷻ alone; they bowed down and prostrated to none but Allah ﷻ; they did not liken Allah ﷻ to anyone or any thing. They established for Allah ﷻ those qualities that He ﷻ established for Himself or that His Messenger ﷺ established for Him; they did so without distorting the meanings of Allah’s perfect qualities, without negating His perfect qualities, and without falsely interpreting His perfect qualities. In short, they realized *Tawheed* in all aspects of their lives – in their souls and in their outward deeds.

One of the recurring themes of Makkan Verses of the Qur’an was the Messengership of Muhammad ﷺ; these Verses confirmed the fact that Muhammad ﷺ was sent to all of mankind, and to jinns as well. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (٢٨)

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not.” (Qur’an 34: 28)

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ يَتَابِعُهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ
الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He); It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad ﷺ) who believes in Allah and His Words [(this Qur’an), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and also Allah’s Word: “Be!” – and he was i.e., Allah’s Word: “Be!” – and he was, i.e., ‘Eesa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary) ﷺ], and follow him so that you may be guided.” (Qur’an 7: 158)

And in yet another part of the Qur’an, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ مُّنْذِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالُوا يَنْقُومَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ يَنْقُومَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ، يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرَكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ آلِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾﴾

“And (remember) when We sent towards you (Muhammad ﷺ) Nafran (three to ten persons) of the jinns, (quietly) listening to the Qur’an, when they stood in the presence thereof, they said: “Listen in silence!” And when it was finished, they returned to their people, as warners. They said: “O our people! Verily! We have heard a Book (this Qur’an) sent down after Moosa (Moses), confirming what came before it, it guides to the truth and to a Straight Path (i.e., Islam). O our people! Respond (with obedience) to Allah’s caller (i.e., Allah’s Messenger

Muhammad ﷺ), and believe in him (i.e., believe in that which Muhammad ﷺ has brought from Allah and follow him). He (Allah) will forgive you of your sins, and will save you from a painful torment (i.e., Hellfire).” (Qur’an 46: 29-31)

Verses with a similar meaning abound in the Qur’an.

Just as some Makkan Verses of the Qur’an instilled into the hearts of the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ correct beliefs regarding *Tawheed* (and its categories) and the mission of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, other Makkan Verses corrected the Companions’ beliefs regarding the angels, informing them that angels are from Allah’s creation. The angels worship Allah ﷻ and perform prostration to Him. They are His slaves, and in no way whatsoever are they partners to Him ﷻ; they can neither harm nor benefit except by His command.

﴿وَيَسِيحُ الرُّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمِحَالِ ۝١٣﴾

“And Ar-Ra’d (thunder) glorifies and praise Him, and so do the angels because of His Awe. He sends the thunderbolts, and therewith He strikes whom He wills, yet they (disbelievers) dispute about Allah. And He is Mighty in strength and Severe in punishment.” (Qur’an 13: 13)

﴿وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنَ دَابَّةٍ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۝٤٩﴾

“And to Allah prostrate all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, of the live moving creatures and the angels, and they are not proud [i.e., they worship their Lord (Allah) with humility].” (Qur’an 16: 49)

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولَىٰ أَجْنِحَةٍ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبْعَ يَزِيدُ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝١﴾

"All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the (only) Originator [or the (Only) Creator] of the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels messengers with wings, – two or three or four. He increases in creation what He wills. Verily, Allah is Able to do all things." (Qur'an 35: 1)

قُلْ أَدْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِيهِمَا مِنْ شِرْكٍَ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ ظَهِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

"Say: (O Muhammad ﷺ to those polytheists, pagans, etc.) "Call upon those whom you assert (to be associate gods) besides Allah, they possess not even the weight of an atom (or a small ant), – either in the heavens or on the earth, nor have they any share in either, nor there is for Him any supporter from among them." (Qur'an 34: 22)

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ﴾ ﴿٢٠٦﴾

"Surely, those who are with your Lord (angels) are never too proud to perform acts of worship to Him, but they glorify His Praise and prostrate before Him." (Qur'an 7: 206)

Similarly, in other Makkan Verses of the Qur'an, the rest of the pillars of Eemaan (faith) were explained to the believers. And some Verses explained how the Qur'an was being revealed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

﴿وَقُرْآنًا فَرَقْنَاهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلَى مُكْثٍ وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ تَنْزِيلًا﴾ ﴿١٠٦﴾

"And (it is) a Qur'an which We have divided (into parts), in order that you might recite it to men at intervals. And We have revealed it by stages (in 23 years)." (Qur'an 17: 106)

﴿اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانٍ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ﴾ ﴿١٣﴾

“Allah has sent down the Best Statement, a Book (this Qur’an), its parts resembling each other in goodness and truth, oft-repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it (when they recite it or hear it). Then their skin and their heart soften to the remembrance of Allah. That is the guidance of Allah. He Guides therewith whom He pleases and whomever Allah sends astray, for him there is no guide.” (Qur’an 39: 23)

﴿وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ بَشَرٍ مِّن شَيْءٍ قُلْ مَن أَنزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ مُوسَىٰ نُورًا وَهُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ يَجْعَلُونَهُ وَقَاطِيسَ يَبْدُونَهَا وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا وَعُلِّمْتُم مَّا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا آبَاؤُكُمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِي خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩١﴾﴾

“They (the Jews, Quraish pagans, idolaters, etc.) did not estimate Allah with an estimation due to Him when they said: “Nothing did Allah send down to any human being (by revelation).” Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Who then sent down the Book which Moosa (Moses) brought, a light and a guidance to mankind which you (the Jews) have made into (separate) papersheets, disclosing (some of it) and concealing (much). And you (believers in Allah and His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ), were taught (through the Qur’an) that which neither you nor your fathers knew.” Say: “Allah (sent it down).” Then leave them to play in their vain discussions.” (Qur’an 6: 91)

Concerning belief in revealed Books, which is one of the pillars of Eemaan, Allah ﷻ informed the believers that He ﷻ has sent down Books other than the Qur’an:

﴿وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا ﴿٥٥﴾﴾

“And your Lord knows best all who are in the heavens and the earth. And indeed, We have preferred some of the Prophets above others, and to Daawood (David) We gave the Zaboor (Psalms).” (Qur’an 17: 55)

﴿نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ أَنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ۝٣﴾

"It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur'an) to you (Muhammad ﷺ) with truth, confirming what came before it. And he sent down the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)." (Qur'an 3: 3)

﴿وَكَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ نَبِيِّ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝٦﴾

"And how many a Prophet have We sent amongst the men of old." (Qur'an 43: 6)

The Qur'an mentions some but certainly not all of them:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ لَمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكَ بِشَايَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فُضِيَ بِالْحَقِّ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ ۝٧٨﴾

"And, indeed We have sent Messengers before you (O Muhammad ﷺ); of some of them We have related to you their story and of some We have not related to you their story, and it was not given to any Messenger that he should bring a sign except by the Leave of Allah. So, when comes the Commandment of Allah, the matter will be decided with truth, and the followers of falsehood will then be lost." (Qur'an 40: 78)

A Description Of Paradise In The Noble Qur'an And The Effect It Had On The Companions ﴿﴾

Makkan Verses of the Qur'an abound with descriptions of the Hereafter. Rare are the Makkan Chapters of the Qur'an that do not contain some mention of the terrifying events that will take place on the Day of Resurrection, of the bliss that dwellers of Paradise will enjoy, of the punishment that dwellers of the Hellfire will be subjected to, of how people will be resurrected, or of how they will be judged for their deeds. So vivid is the description of the Hereafter in the Qur'an that it is as if a person

reading the Qur'an sees the Day of Resurrection with his very own eyes:

﴿وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ سُبْحَنَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾ (٧٦) وَنُفِخَ فِي الْأُصْوَِرِ فَصَوَّقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَى فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنْظُرُونَ (٧٨) وَأَشْرَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ وَجَاءَتِ بِالنِّبْتِينِ وَالشُّهَدَاءُ وَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (٧٩) وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ (٨٠) وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا فَتَحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُم وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِنْ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَةُ الْعَذَابِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ (٨١) قِيلَ ادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فِئَسَ مَوَى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ (٨٢) وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ (٨٣) وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ (٨٤) وَتَرَى الْمَلَائِكَةَ حَافِيَاتٍ مِّنْ حَوْلِ الْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَقِيلَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

"They made not a just estimate of Allah such as is due to Him. And on the Day of Resurrection the whole of the earth will be grasped by His Hand and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right Hand. Gloified be He, and High is He above all that they associate as partners with Him! And the Trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth will swoon away, except him whom Allah will. Then it will be blown a second time and behold, they will be standing, looking on (waiting). And the earth will shine with the light of its Lord (Allah, when He will come to judge among men) and the Book will be placed (open) and the Prophets and the witnesses will be

brought forward, and it will be judged between them with truth, and they will not be wronged. And each person will be paid in full of what he did; and He is Best Aware of what they do. And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups, till, when they reach it, the gates thereof will be opened (suddenly like a prison at the arrival of the prisoners). And its keepers will say, "Did not the Messengers come to you from yourselves, - reciting to you the Verses of your Lord, and warning you of the Meeting of this Day of yours?" They will say: "Yes, but the Word of torment has been justified against the disbelievers!" It will be said (to them): "Enter you the gates of Hell, to abide therein. And (indeed) what an evil abode of the arrogant!" And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups, till, when they reach it, and its gates will be opened (before their arrival for their reception) and its keepers will say: Salamun 'Alaikum (peace be upon you)! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein." And they will say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah Who has fulfilled His Promise to us and has made us inherit (this) land. We can dwell in Paradise where we will; how excellent a reward for the (pious good) workers!" And you will see the angels surrounding the Throne (of Allah) from all round, glorifying the praises of their Lord (Allah). And they (all the creatures) will be judged with truth, and it will be said. All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)." (Qur'an 39: 67-75)

Many Verses of the Qur'an contain a description of Paradise: that there is nothing similar to it; that it has doors; that it has levels; that rivers flow underneath it; that it contains springs, castles, and tents; and that in it are trees of various kinds, such as *Sidratul-Muntahah* and the *Toobah* tree. Allah ﷻ also mentioned the blissful existence of the dwellers of Paradise: their food, their drink, wine, drinking vessels, clothes, jewelry, servants, speech, and women. He ﷻ even mentioned the best of what they will be given. Here are some of the qualities of Paradise that are mentioned or described in the Noble Qur'an:

1) There is nothing that is similar to Paradise

The bliss of Paradise is something that Allah ﷻ, from His boundless generosity, has prepared for His obedient slaves. We have to keep in mind that, although Allah ﷻ described for us some of the pleasures of Paradise, He ﷻ has kept hidden from us much that we cannot in this present life comprehend.

﴿فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (٧)

"No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do." (Qur'an 32: 17)

Allah ﷻ clarified the reason why His obedient slaves will be rewarded: the good deeds that He ﷻ guided them to perform, such as praying in the late hours of the night and spending for the cause of Islam. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿نَتَجَافَى جُنُوبَهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾ (١٦) ﴿فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (٧)

"Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allah's Cause) out of what We have bestowed on them. No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do." (Qur'an 32: 16, 17)

2) The levels of Paradise

Human beings are at different levels in this world: Allah ﷻ guides some more than others, and some perform more and better deeds than others; similarly, people will be at different levels in Paradise. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَن يَأْتِهِ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ الصَّالِحَاتِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلَى﴾ (٧٥)

"But whoever comes to Him (Allah) as a believer (in the Oneness of Allah, etc.), and has done righteous good deeds, for such are the high ranks (in the Hereafter)." (Qur'an 20: 75)

An obedient slave of Allah ﷺ will be at a level that is suitable to his Eemaan (faith) and piety:

﴿أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَلِالْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَاتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا﴾ (١١)

“See how We prefer one above another (in this world) and verily, the Hereafter will be greater in degrees and greater in preference.” (Qur’an 17: 21)

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُمْ مِنْ عَمَلِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ﴾ (١٢)

“And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in faith, – to them shall We join their offspring, and We shall not decrease the reward of their deeds in anything. Every person is a pledge for that which he has earned.” (Qur’an 52: 21)

﴿لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ عُرُفٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهَا عُرُفٌ مَّبْنِيَّةٌ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَا يَخْلِفُ اللَّهُ الْمِعَادَ﴾ (٢٠)

“But those who fear Allah and keep their duty to their Lord (Allah), for them are built lofty rooms; one above another under which rivers flow (i.e., Paradise). (This is) the Promise of Allah: and Allah does not fail in (His) Promise.” (Qur’an 39: 20)

3) The rivers of Paradise

In many Verses of the Noble Qur’an, Allah ﷻ mentioned the rivers of Paradise:

﴿مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ لَّبَنٍ لَّهَّ يَنْغَيَّرُ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ﴾ (١٥)

“The description of Paradise which the Muttaqoon (pious) have been promised is that in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed ; rivers of milk of which the taste never changes ; rivers of wine delicious to those who drink ; and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure) therein for them is every kind of fruit ; and forgiveness from their Lord.” (Qur’an 47: 15)

4) The springs of Paradise

There are many springs in Paradise, and they vary in their taste. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ۝٤٥﴾

“Truly! The Muttaqoon (pious and righteous persons) will be amidst Gardens and water-springs (Paradise).” (Qur’an 15: 45)

He ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلِّلٍ وَعُيُونٍ ۝٤١﴾

“Verily, the Muttaqoon (pious) shall be amidst shades and springs.” (Qur’an 77: 41)

Describing the two gardens that He ﷻ prepared for those who fear Him, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ فَضَّاخَتَانِ ۝٦٦﴾

“In them (both) will be two springs gushing forth water.” (Qur’an 55: 66)

In Paradise there are two springs whose water Allah’s close, obedient slaves will drink in pure, unmixed form; The *Abrar* (pious ones who fear Allah and avoid evil) will also drink from those springs, but the water they drink from will be mixed with other things. One of the two springs I am referring to is *Kafur*, and it is mentioned in this Verse:

﴿إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ۝٥٠ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ

اللَّهُ يَفْجَرُوهَا فَجِيرًا ﴿٦٧﴾

“Verily, the *Abrar* (pious who fear Allah and avoid evil), shall drink a cup (of wine) mixed with water from a spring in Paradise called *Kafur*. A spring wherefrom the slaves of Allah will drink, causing it to gush forth abundantly.” (Qur’an 76: 5, 6)

In this Verse, we learn that the *Abrar* will drink from the spring of *Kafur* a drink that is mixed with other substances, and that the slaves of Allah ﷺ will drink *Kafur*’s water in pure form. The second spring is called *At-Tasneem*. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٣٤﴾ يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْمُومٍ ﴿٣٥﴾ خِتَمُهُمُ مِنْ مَسْكٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَمُرَاجِعُهُمْ فِي تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾﴾

“Verily, *Al-Abrar* (the pious ones who fear Allah and avoid evil) will be in Delight (Paradise). On thrones, looking (at all things). You will recognize in their faces the brightness of delight. They will be given to drink pure sealed wine. The last thereof (that wine) will be the smell of Musk, and for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e., hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allah). It (that wine) will be mixed with *Tasnim*. A spring whereof drink those nearest to Allah.” (Qur’an 83: 22-28)

Another spring in Paradise we know about is called *As-Salsabil*. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا ﴿١٧﴾ عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا ﴿١٨﴾﴾

“And they will be given to drink there a cup (of wine) mixed with *Zanjabil* (ginger, etc.), A spring there, called *Salsabil*.” (Qur’an 76: 17, 18)

5) A description of some of the trees in Paradise

Sidrat-ul-Muntaha is a tree that Allah ﷻ informed us about in the Noble Qur’an; it was near *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha* that the Prophet ﷺ

saw Jibreel ﷺ upon his natural form – the form upon which Allah ﷻ created him. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ۖ عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ۚ عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ ۖ إِذْ يَغْشَىٰ السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ۚ مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ۚ﴾ (١٧)

“And indeed he (Muhammad ﷺ) saw him [Jibreel (Gabriel)] at a second descent (i.e., another time). Near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha [lote-tree of the utmost boundary (beyond which none can pass)], Near it is the Paradise of Abode. When that covered the lote-tree which did cover it! The sight (of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) turned not aside (right or left), nor it transgressed beyond (the) limit (ordained for it).” (Qur’an 53: 13-17)

Then there is the *Tooba* tree, a huge tree from which garments are made for the dwellers of Paradise. Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudree ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “*Tooba*, a tree in Paradise, is the distance of 100 years (this means that it takes 100 years to traverse it, and Allah ﷻ knows best). The garments of the people of Paradise come out from its shoots.”^[1] In another narration, Abu Hurairah ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Verily, in Paradise there is a tree under whose shade a rider travels for 100 years. And recite if you wish:

﴿وَطَلَّ مَمْدُودٌ﴾ (٣٠)

“In shade long-extended.” (Qur’an 56: 30).^[2]

6) The Food and Drink of the people of Paradise

Allah ﷻ mentioned that Paradise contains in it every kind of food and drink that people desire:

﴿وَفِيهَا مِنَّا يَتَخَبَّزُونَ﴾

^[1] *Silsilatul-Ahaadeeth-As-Saheehah* by Albaanee (may Allah have mercy on him): 3/639. *Hadeeth* number: 1985.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Beginning of Creation”; chapter, “What is Related About Paradise and About It Being Created.” *Hadeeth* number: 3352.

"And fruit; that they may choose." (Qur'an 56: 20)

﴿يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِّنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مِمَّا نَشْتَهُيهِ الْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ
الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾ (٧١)

"Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them (there will be) therein all that the one's inner-selves could desire, all that the eyes could delight in, and you will abide therein forever." (Qur'an 43: 71)

﴿كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ﴾ (٢٤)

"Eat and drink at ease for that which you have sent on before you in days past!" (Qur'an 69: 24)

7) The Wine in Paradise

Allah ﷻ will bless the dwellers of Paradise with wine, but certainly not the wine that people drink in this world; in fact, in many regards, it will be exactly opposite of the wine of this world. The wine of the Hereafter will be free of all of the defects that are found in the wine of this world. In this world, wine has an intoxicating and harmful effect on the mind. When people drink wine in this world, they can develop headaches, stomachaches, and other sicknesses. These are some problems associated with drinking moderate quantities of wine; the problems associated with drinking large quantities at a time are too many to enumerate here. The wine of the Hereafter is free of all of the above-mentioned problems and defects; it is in contrast a beautiful and wonderful drink. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِكَأْسٍ مِّنْ مَّعِينٍ ۖ بَيَّضَاءَ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ ۚ لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُذَفَّرُونَ﴾ (٤٧)

"Round them – will be passed a cup of pure wine; white, delicious to the drinkers. Neither they will have Ghoul (any kind of hurt, abdominal pain, headache, a sin, etc.) from that, nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom." (Qur'an 37: 45-47)

Describing the wine of the Hereafter in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يُطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَدُنُّ مُخَلَّدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ يَكُوبُ وَأَبَارِقُ وَكَأْسٍ مِنْ مَعِينِ ﴿١٨﴾ لَا يَصُدُّونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنْفَوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

"They will be served by immortal boys, with cups, and jugs, and a glass from the flowing wine, wherefrom they will get neither any aching of the head, nor any intoxication." (Qur'an 56: 17-19)

And in yet another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْمُومٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ خِتَمُهُ مِسْكَ وَفِي ذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُنَافِسُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

"They will be given to drink pure sealed wine. The last thereof (that wine) will be the smell of Musk, and for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e., hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allah)." (Qur'an 83: 25, 26)

In this last Verse, Allah ﷻ informs us first that the wine they will be given is pure, and second that, while they finish drinking it, they will perceive the smell of *Musk*.^[1]

8) The Food and Drink of Paradise are pure, both in Entering and Exiting the Body

Paradise itself is free from purities, and so too are its dwellers. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The first group from my nation to enter Paradise will be upon the form of the moon, on the night of a full moon. Then those that follow them will be upon the light of the brightest star in the sky. Those that come after them will be of various levels. They (i.e., all of them) will neither defecate nor urinate; they will neither blow their noses (i.e., they will not have phlegm in them) nor spit."^[2] Here, the Prophet ﷺ informs us that

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (6/514).

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Paradise"; chapter, "The First Group of People to Enter Paradise." *Hadeeth* number: 2834. And Bukhaaree related it in the "Book of Prophets."

the dwellers of Paradise differ from one another in terms of the strength of their light. But in another regard, they will all be similar: they will be free from all impurities – feces, urine, phlegm, etc. The food and drink they consume will turn into sweat, which has the smell of *Musk*, and which will flow from their bodies. Some of their food and drink will leave their bodies through belching, but it will be belching that is redolent of sweet and wonderful fragrances. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Verily, the dwellers of Paradise will eat and drink in Paradise. They will not, however, spit, urinate, defecate, or blow their noses.” The Prophet’s Companions ﷺ asked, “Then what will happen to their food (after they consume it)?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Belching and sweat that is like the sweat of *Musk* (the best kind of perfume).”^[1]

9) The Clothing, Jewelry, and Perfume of the Dwellers of Paradise

Attired in wonderful attire, such as clothing made of silk, the dwellers of Paradise will also be adorned with jewelry made of gold, silver, and pearls. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿جَنَّتٌ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ﴾ (٣٣)

“Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens) will they enter, therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments there will be of silk (i.e., in Paradise).” (Qur’an 35: 33)

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿عَلَيْهِمْ ثِيَابٌ سُنْدُسٌ خُصْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُّوْا أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَنَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ سَرَابًا طَهُورًا﴾ (١١)

[1] Saheeh Muslim, “The Book of Paradise”; chapter, “Descriptions of Paradise, Its People, and Their Glorification Therein, in the Morning and the Evening.” Hadeeth number: 2835.

"Their garments will be of fine green silk, and gold embroidery. They will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord will give them a pure drink." (Qur'an 76: 21)

They will wear clothing of many different colours; for example, they will wear 'green garments of fine and thick silk':

﴿أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَّكِئِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ نَعَمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرَقَّاتُهَا ۝﴾

"These! For them will be 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them, therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk. They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafqa (dwelling, resting place, etc.)!" (Qur'an 18: 31)

In addition to sweating *Musk* from their pure bodies, the dwellers of Paradise will perfume themselves with sweet-smelling incense. Describing the dwellers of Paradise, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Their vessels (dishes, plates, utensils) are made of gold and silver, and their combs are made of gold. And the firewood of their censers (vessels in which incense is burnt) consists of sticks of perfume. And their sweat is *Musk* (the best kind of perfume)."^[1] Elsewhere, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ described the everlasting qualities of clothes and jewelry in Paradise: "Whoever enters Paradise will enjoy eternal bliss and will never be wretched; his clothes will not wear away, and his youth will not pass away."^[2]

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Beginning of Creation"; chapter, "What is Related About the Description of Paradise." *Hadeeth* number: 3246.

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Paradise, Its Bliss, and Its Dwellers"; chapter, "The Eternal Bliss of Paradise's Dwellers." *Hadeeth* number: 2836.

10) The Gatherings of the people of Paradise and their Speech

The dwellers of Paradise will visit one another, and they will assemble in pleasant and good gatherings. In their conversations, they will reminisce about their worldly doings and about how Allah ﷻ blessed them by admitting them into Paradise. Allah ﷻ said of their gatherings:

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ ٤٧﴾

"And We shall remove from their breasts any sense of injury (that they may have), (So they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones." (Qur'an 15: 47)

Allah ﷻ also informs us of some of the things that the dwellers of Paradise will say:

﴿وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ٥٠ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلَ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ٥١ فَمَنِ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقْنَا عَذَابَ السَّمُورِ ٥٢ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ ٥٣﴾

"And some of them draw near to others, questioning. Saying: "Aforetime, we were afraid (of the punishment of Allah) in the midst of our families. But Allah has been gracious to us, and has saved us from the torment of the Fire. Verily, we used to invoke Him (Alone and none else) before. Verily, He is Al-Barr (the Most Subtle, Kind, Courteous, and Generous), the Most Merciful." (Qur'an 52: 25-28)

They will even reminisce about evil people, those who would try to turn Muslims away from their faith:

﴿فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ٥٠ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ إِنِّي كَانَ لِي قَرِيبٌ ٥١ يَقُولُ أَهَٰذَا مِمَّا كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ٥٢ أَهَٰذَا مِنَّا وَكُنَّا تُرَايَا وَعَظْمًا كَآءُنَّا لَمَدِينُونَ ٥٣ قَالَ هَلْ أَنتُمْ مُّطْلَعُونَ ٥٤ فَأُطْلِعَ قَرَأَهُ فِي سَوَاءٍ الْجَحِيمِ ٥٥ قَالَ تَاللَّهِ إِن كِدْتَ لَتُرِينَ ٥٦ وَلَوْلَا

يَعْمَهُ رَبِّي لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ أَفَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَيِّتِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ إِلَّا مَوْتَنَا الْأَوَّلَى وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾ إِنَّ هَذَا هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾ لِمِثْلِ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ﴿

“Then they will turn to one another, mutually questioning. A speaker of them will say: “Verily, I had a companion (in the world), who used to say: “Are you among those who believe (in resurrection after death). (That) when we die and become dust and bones, shall we indeed (be raised up) to receive reward or punishment (according to our deeds)?” (The man) said: “Will you look down?” So he looked down and saw him in the midst of the Fire. He said: “By Allah! You have nearly ruined me. Had it not been for the Grace of my Lord, I would certainly have been among those brought forth (to Hell).” (Allah informs about that true believer that he said): “Are we then not to die (any more)? Except our first death, and we shall not be punished? (after we have entered Paradise).” Truly, this is the supreme success! For the like of this let the workers work.” (Qur’an 37: 50-61)

11) The Wives of Paradise’s Dwellers

If a believer’s wife in this world is a believer herself, then they will be husband and wife in the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

“Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), which they shall enter and (also) those who acted righteously from among their fathers, and their wives, and their offspring. And angels shall enter unto them from every gate.” (Qur’an 13: 23)

﴿هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي ظِلَالٍ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ مُتَكِهِونَ ﴿٥٦﴾﴾

“They and their wives will be in pleasant shade, reclining on thrones.” (Qur’an 36: 56)

﴿أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾﴾

"Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness." (Qur'an 43: 70)

12) Al-Hoor Al-'Een (Fair Maidens of Paradise who have wide, beautiful eyes)

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كَذَٰلِكَ وَزَوَّجْنَاهُم بِحُورٍ عِينٍ ٥٥﴾

"So (it will be), and We shall marry them to Hoor 'Een (houris-female fair ones) with wide, lovely eyes." (Qur'an 44: 54)

In this Verse, the fair women of Paradise are called *Hoor 'Een*, both of which words are descriptive in nature. *Hoor* is the plural of *Hooraa*, a woman whose eyes are extremely white in the white portion of her eyes, and extremely black in the black portion of her eyes. *'Een* is the plural of *'Ainaa*, which means: wide eyes. In the following Verse, Allah ﷻ mentions two other descriptive qualities of the *Hoor 'Een*, that they are *Kawaa'ib* and *Atraab*:

﴿إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا ٣١ حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا ٣٢ وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا ٣٣﴾

"Verily, for the Muttaqoon, there will be a success (Paradise); gardens and vineyards; and young full-breasted (mature) maidens of equal age." (Qur'an 78: 31-33)

Kawaa'ib is the plural of *Kaa'ib*, which refers to a beautiful woman whose breasts protrude forward. And *Atraab* means that they will be of equal age to their male partners. Allah ﷻ created the *Hoor 'Een* specially for Paradise:

﴿إِنَّا أَنشَأْنَهُنَّ إِنِشَاءً ٣٥ جَعَلْنَهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا ٣٦ عُرًّا أَتْرَابًا ٣٧﴾

"Verily, We have created them (maidens) of special creation. And made them virgins. Loving (their husbands only), equal in age." (Qur'an 56: 35-37)

That they are virgins obviously means that no one before their male counterparts in Paradise had ever had sex with them:

﴿فِيهِنَّ قَصِيرَاتُ الْإِطْرَفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْنِ إِسْ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌ ۝٥٦﴾

"Wherein both will be those (maidens) restraining their glances upon their husbands, whom no man or jinn yatmithhunna (has opened their hymens with sexual intercourse) before them." (Qur'an 55: 56)

Allah ﷻ used various metaphors to describe the Hoor 'Een:

﴿وَحُورٌ عَيْنٌ ۝٢٢ كَأَمْثَلِ اللَّوْلِيِّ الْمَكُونِ ۝٢٣﴾

"And (there will be) Hoor 'Een (houris-female fair ones) with wide, lovely eyes (as waves for the pious), like unto preserved pearls." (Qur'an 56: 22, 23)

In this Verse, they are likened to pearls that are *Maknoon*, or hidden, protected, and preserved, pearls whose pure colour has not been changed by the light of the sun or by the handling of people. In another Verse, Allah ﷻ compares them to rubies and coral:

﴿فِيهِنَّ قَصِيرَاتُ الْإِطْرَفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْنِ إِسْ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌ ۝٥٦ فَإِنِّي ءَلَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ نُكَدِّبَانِ ۝٥٧ كَأَنَّ الْيَاقُوتَ وَالْمَرْجَانَ ۝٥٨﴾

"Wherein both will be those (maidens) restraining their glances upon their husbands, whom no man or jinn yatmithhunna (has opened their hymens with sexual intercourse) before them. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinns and men) deny? (In beauty) they are like rubies and coral." (Qur'an 55: 56-58)

Rubies and corals are precious, beautiful, and valuable stones, which are wonderful to look at. The Hoor 'Een are also described as being *Qaasirat-ut-Tarf*, which means that they have eyes for their husbands only, and not for anyone else. And so they are good and beautiful, both in the way they look and in the way they make their husbands feel.

﴿فِيهِنَّ خَيْرٌ حَسَانٌ ۝٧٠ فَإِنِّي ءَلَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ نُكَدِّبَانِ ۝٧١﴾

“Therein (Gardens) will be fair (wives) good and beautiful ; Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinns and men) deny?” (Qur’an 55: 70, 71)

Unlike the women of this world, the women of Paradise are pure – pure from menstruation and post-natal bleeding, from spittle and phlegm, from urine and feces. The men of Paradise will also be pure. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The form of the first group of people to enter Paradise will be the moon, on the night of a full moon. In it (i.e., in Paradise), they (the dwellers of Paradise, men and women alike) will not spit, blow their noses, or defecate. Their vessels (dishes, plates, utensils) will be made of gold, and their combs will be made of gold and silver. (The fuel of) their censers (vessels in which incense is burnt) will be *Al-Uluwwah* (a kind of stick that one uses for perfuming oneself with incense). Their sweat is *Musk* (the best kind of perfume), and each one of them will have two wives, whose bone marrow from their legs can be seen from behind their flesh, so beautiful are they.”^[1] In another *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Were a woman from the dwellers of Paradise to overlook the people of the earth, all that is between them would be illuminated and filled with fragrance. And indeed, the veil on her head is better than the earth and all that is in it.”^[2]

13) The Best That Is Given To The Dwellers Of Paradise

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, Allah, the Blessed, the Exalted, will say, ‘Do you want something that I can give you in addition (to what I already gave you)?’ They will say, ‘Did you not whiten our faces? Did you not admit us into Paradise and save us from the Hellfire?’ He will remove the veil, and they will not have been given anything that

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Beginning of Creation”; chapter, “What is Related About the Description of Paradise and About It Being Created.” *Hadeeth* number: 3245.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Book of *Jihaad* and Biographies”; chapter, “*Al-Hoor Al-Een* (The fair maidens of Paradise who have wide, beautiful eyes) and Their Description. (2796).

is more beloved to them than looking at their Lord, the Blessed, the Exalted.” At the end of one of the narrations of this *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ then recited this Verse:

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ۖ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

“For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e., Paradise) and even more (i.e., having the honour of glancing at the Countenance of Allah ﷻ). Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, they will abide therein forever.” (Qur’an 10: 26)^[1]

Also, Allah ﷻ will be pleased with the dwellers of Paradise, never again to become angry with them. Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudree ؓ related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Verily, Allah ﷻ will say to the people of Paradise, ‘O people of Paradise.’ And they will say, ‘*Labbaik*, our Lord, and *Sa’daik* (here we are, with continual obedience, and continually seeking to please You), and all goodness is in Your Hands.’ He will say, ‘Are you pleased?’ They will say, ‘And why should we not be pleased, O our Lord, when You have indeed given us that which You have not given to anyone else from Your creation?’ He will say, ‘Shall I not give you even better than that?’ They will say, ‘Our Lord, and what can be better than that?’ He ﷻ will say, ‘I will make incumbent upon you My Good Pleasure, so that I will never afterwards be angry with you.’”^[2]

14) The close of Their request will be: “All the praises and Thanks Be to Allah, The Lord of All that Exists.”

The believers will witness many terrifying events on the Day of Resurrection, the last of which is passing over the *Siraat* (bridge

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Faith”; chapter, “It Being Established That the Believers will See Their Lord in the Hereafter.” *Hadeeth* number: 180.

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Paradise, Its Description, and Its Bliss”; chapter, “The Good Pleasure (of Allah) Settles Down Upon the Believers.” *Hadeeth* number: 2829.

that is erected over the Hellfire; those that safely cross it will enter Paradise). Then, after removing from them all grief, Allah ﷻ will admit them into Paradise. Seeing what Allah ﷻ has prepared for them, they will glorify and praise Allah ﷻ:

﴿جَنَّتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ﴾ (٣٣) وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

“Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens) will they enter, therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments therein will be of silk (i.e., in Paradise). And they will say: “All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has removed from us (all) grief. Verily, our Lord is indeed a Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (good deeds and to recompense).” (Qur’an 35: 33, 34)

And the close of their request in the gardens of Paradise will be, “All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Lord of all that exists.”

﴿دَعْوَتُهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ وَمَا خَرُّ دَعْوَتُهُمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ (١٠)

“Their way of request therein will be Subhanaka Allahumma (Glory to You, O Allah!) and Salam (peace, safe from each and every evil) will be their greetings therein (Paradise)! And the close of their request will be: Al-Hamdu Lillahi Rabb-il-'Alamin [All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of 'Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists)].” (Qur’an 10: 10)

Both Allah ﷻ, in the Qur’an, and the Prophet ﷺ, through his sayings, gave a vivid description of Paradise to the Companions ﷺ, so vivid in fact that it was as if they could see Paradise before them. While a Companion read or heard Verses that described Paradise, he was made to feel that the reality of this life is in the distant past, while the reality of Paradise is in the immediate present. That the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ felt this way is mainly

because of the vivid descriptions of Paradise in the Qur'an – attests to the stylistic and linguistic miracle of the Qur'an.

For the Muslim nation to prosper, it is of the utmost importance that Muslims both clearly visualize Paradise and believe with certainty in it. When the description of Paradise becomes alive in the individuals of this nation, they will collectively work hard to please Allah ﷻ, making any sacrifice that is necessary along the way; and they will no longer feel weak or fear death. In fact, the many military victories that Muslims enjoyed throughout history were achieved through many reasons, one of the most important of which was a desire, on the part of generals and soldiers alike, to become martyred in the way of Allah ﷻ and to consequently enter Paradise.

A Description Of The Hellfire In The Noble Qur'an And The Effect That Had On The Prophet's Companions ﷺ

The Companions ﷺ hoped from Allah ﷻ but they feared Him as well, for just as the Qur'an contained vivid descriptions of Paradise, so too did it contain rich and intense descriptions of the Hellfire. In addition to the Hellfire, the terrifying events concerned with the end of this world and the Day of Resurrection are also treated in the Qur'an – the destruction of the earth, the crumbling of the mountains, the scattering of the stars, etc. The terrors that the disbelievers will be subjected to are also detailed in the Qur'an – their humiliation, wretchedness, and painful torment. Many Verses of the Qur'an remind people that they will be accountable and will pay a heavy penalty for all of the wrongs they perpetrated against others; masters will be pitted against slaves, leaders against their citizens, murderers against those they murdered, disbelievers against *Shaitaan* – and even a person against his very own limbs, which will attest to the wrongs he did. The Qur'an informs us of how the disbelievers will enter the Hellfire, of how both hypocrites and believers will pass over *As-Siraat* (a bridge that is erected over the Hellfire), and of how only the believers will then be saved. All of these themes and

topics had a profound effect on the souls of the Prophet's Companions. As for the Hellfire and the punishments that will be meted out to people in it, the Qur'an provides a clear and rich description of both. Here are some of the things we learn about regarding the Hellfire from the Noble Qur'an:

1) The Food, Drink, and Clothing of Hell's Denizens

- a) No one in this world can imagine just how vile the food is in the Hellfire; what is more, the denizens of the Hellfire will have no choice but to eat what is given to them. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيعٍ ۝ لَا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنْ جُوعٍ ۝﴾ (٧)

"No food will there be for them but a poisonous thorny plant, which will neither nourish nor avail against hunger." (Qur'an 88: 6, 7)

People eat food for nourishment and for pleasure, but the food of the Hellfire will neither nourish nor give pleasure; rather, it will be a form of torture and punishment. Other than a poisonous thorny plant, they will also have to eat from a tree called *Zaqqum*:

﴿إِنَّ شَجَرَةَ الزَّقُّومِ ۝ طَعَامُ الْأَثِيمِ ۝ كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ ۝ كَغَلْيِ الْحَمِيمِ ۝﴾ (٤٦)

"Verily, the tree of Zaqqum, will be the food of the sinners, like boiling oil, it will boil in the bellies, like the boiling of scalding water." (Qur'an 44: 43-46)

Allah ﷻ made reference to the *Zaqqum* tree in other Verses as well:

﴿أَذَلَّكَ خَيْرٌ نَزْلًا أَمْ شَجَرَةُ الزَّقُّومِ ۝﴾ (١٢)

"Is that (Paradise) better entertainment or the tree of Zaqqum (a horrible tree in Hell)?" (Qur'an 37: 62)

﴿ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَنْتَ الْأَضْلُونَ الْمُكَذِّبُونَ ۝ لَا تَكُونُونَ مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِّنْ زُقُومٍ ۝ فَالْثَوْنُ مِنْهَا ۝ الْبُطُونُ ۝ فَشَرِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ۝ فَشَرِبُونَ شُرْبَ أَلِيمٍ ۝﴾ (٥٢)

“Then moreover, verily, – you the erring-ones, the deniers (of Resurrection)! You verily will eat of the trees of Zaqqum. Then you will fill your bellies therewith. And drink boiling water on top of it. So you will drink (that) like thirsty camels!” (Qur’an 56: 51-55)

From these Verses we learn that the *Zaqqum* tree is indeed a most foul and vile thing; its roots are found in the bottom of the Hellfire, while its shoots and branches spread out over all parts of the Hellfire. The fruits of *Zaqqum* are ugly to look at, which is why they are compared to the heads of devils. And although we haven’t seen devils with our eyes, we, by our very nature, know them to be horribly ugly, just as we know angels to be beautiful. Despite the ugliness in appearance and foulness in taste of those fruits, the people of the Hellfire will become so hungry that they will be forced to eat them; in fact, they will fill their stomachs with the fruits of *Zaqqum*. When their stomachs are filled with the fruits of *Zaqqum*, the fruits will begin to boil like burning oil. The pain they will then feel is immense, beyond what we can now express in words. When they find themselves to be in this wretched state, they will hurry to *Al-Hameem*, boiling water that reaches the extreme of hotness, and they will drink from it like thirsty camels. *Al-Hameem* is so hot that it will cut up their bowels. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَتَغَيَّرَ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ حَمَرٍ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ﴾ (٥١)

“The description of Paradise which the Muttaqoon (the pious) have been promised (is that) in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure); therein for them is every kind of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord. (Are these) like

those who shall dwell for ever in the Fire, and be given, to drink, boiling water, so that it cuts up their bowels?" (Qur'an 47: 15)

When the denizens of Hell eat the vile food described above, they will choke on it, because it is so foul and disgusting:

﴿إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَحِمِيمًا ۖ (١٢) وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۖ (١٣)﴾

"Verily, with Us are fetters (to bind them), and a raging Fire. And a food that chokes, and a painful torment." (Qur'an 73: 12, 13)

Another kind of food that the denizens of Hell will eat is *Ghisleen*:

﴿فَلَيْسَ لَهُ يَوْمَ هَهُنَا حَمِيمٌ ۖ (٣٥) وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غَسِيلٍ ۖ (٣٦) لَا يَأْكُلُهُ إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُونَ ۖ (٣٧)﴾

"So no friend has he here this Day, nor any food except filth from the washing of wounds (*Ghisleen*). None will eat except the *Khati'un* (sinners, disbelievers, polytheists, etc.)." (Qur'an 69: 35-37)

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَخَرُ مِنْ شَكْلِهِ أَزْوَاجٌ﴾

"And other (torments) of similar kind – all together!" (Qur'an 38: 58)

Ghassaaq in this last Verse and *Ghisleen* mean the same thing: the pus that flows from the wounded flesh of Hell's inhabitants. Some maintain that *Ghisleen* and *Ghassaaq* refer to the discharge that flows from the private parts of fornicating women and from the rotten flesh of the disbelievers. Al-Qurtubee said that they are "the juices that (flow from the bodies) of Hell's denizens."

b) They will have different kinds of drink: *Al-Hameem*, *Al-Ghassaaq*, *Al-Muhl*, and *As-Sadeed*. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَاءٍ غَيْرِ ءَاسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَتَغَيَّرَ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ حَمْرٍ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ

كُلِّ الشَّمْرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

“The description of Paradise which the Muttaqoon (the pious) have been promised (is that) in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure); therein for them is every kind of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord. (Are these) like those who shall dwell for ever in the Fire, and be given, to drink, boiling water, so that it cuts up their bowels?” (Qur’an 47: 15)

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ فَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِن وَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِن يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿١٩﴾﴾

“And say: “The truth is from your Lord.” Then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We have prepared for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water like boiling oil that will scald their faces. Terrible the drink, and an evil Murtafaqa (dwelling, resting, place, etc.)!” (Qur’an 18: 29)

﴿مِن وَرَآيِهِ جَهَنَّمُ وَسُقِيَ مِن مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾ يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِغُهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ وَمِن وَرَآيِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

“In front of him (every obstinate, arrogant dictator) is Hell, and he will be made to drink boiling, festering water. He will sip it unwillingly, and he will find a great difficulty to swallow it down his throat, and death will come to him from every side, yet he will not die and in front of him, will be a great torment.” (Qur’an 14: 16, 17)

﴿هَذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَعَسَاقٌ﴾ (٥٧)

“This is so! Then let them taste it, – a boiling fluid and dirty wound discharges.” (Qur’an 38: 57)

These Verses mention four kinds of drinks that will be consumed by the denizens of Hell: First, *Al-Hameem*, which is boiling hot water that reaches the pinnacle of hotness; second, *Al-Ghassaaq*, which we discussed in the previous section about the food that Hellfire’s denizens will eat – so it is discussed as both a kind of food and a kind of drink; third, *As-Sadeed*, which refers to what flows from the meat and skin of disbelievers; and fourth, *Al-Muhl*, which is like burning oil: when one comes near to it, one’s scalp falls off.

c) As for the clothing that the denizens of Hell will wear, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقْرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ۝٤٩ سَرَابُهُمْ مِنْ قَطِرَانٍ وَتَغْشَى وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ﴾

“And you will see the Mujrimoon (criminals, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism, polytheists, disobedient to Allah, etc.) that Day bound together in fetters; (Muqarranoon in fetters; mean : – with their hands and feet tied to their necks with chains.) Their garments will be of pitch (Qatiraan), and fire will cover their faces.” (Qur’an 14: 49, 50)

Qatiraan, the clothing they will wear, means molten copper (or perhaps tar).

2) Punishment in the Hellfire

a) Varying degrees of punishment.

Just as the dwellers of Paradise will be at different levels, each enjoying a level of pleasure that is in accordance with his ranking and deeds, so too will the denizens of Hell be at various levels. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ۖ﴾ (٤٦)

"The Fire ; they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon, and on the Day when the Hour will be established (it will be said to the angels) : "Cause Fir'aun's (Pharaoh) people to enter the severest torment!" (Qur'an 40: 46)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ زِدْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يُفْسِدُونَ ۝﴾ (٨٨)

"Those who disbelieved and hinder (men) from the Path of Allah, for them We will add torment over the torment ; because they used to spread corruption [by disobeying Allah themselves, as well as ordering others (mankind) to do so]." (Qur'an 16: 88)

And the Prophet ﷺ described the punishment of those who will be in the shallowest part of the Hellfire: "Verily, from the dwellers of Hell who will be least punished on the Day of Resurrection is a man who will have live coal placed on the sole of his feet, and as a result of that, his brain will boil."^[1]

b) They will be gathered together on their faces, and the Hellfire will burn their faces.

One of the ways in which Allah ﷻ will humiliate the disbelievers is that He ﷻ will "gather them together on the Day of Resurrection on their faces – blind, dumb, and deaf." Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِهِ يُنْصَرِفُونَ ۚ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمٌ وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ تَبْعٌ ۚ كَلِمًا خَبَتْ زِدْنَاهُمْ سَعِيرًا ۝﴾ (٩٧)

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, "The Book of Ragaaiq"; chapter, "The Description of Paradise and the Hellfire." Hadeeth number: 6561.

"And he whom Allah guides, he is led aright; but he whom He sends astray – for such you will find no Auliya' (helpers and protectors, etc.), besides Him, and We shall gather them together on the Day of Resurrection on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf, their abode will be Hell; whenever it abates, We shall increase for them the fierceness of the Fire." (Qur'an 17: 97)

And then they will be thrown on their faces into the Hellfire:

﴿وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (٩٠)

"And whoever brings an evil (deed) (i.e., Shirk – polytheism, disbelief in the Oneness of Allah and every evil sinful deed), they will be cast down (prone) on their faces in the Fire. (And it will be said to them) "Are you being recompensed anything except what you used to do?" (Qur'an 27: 90)

Then, in the Hellfire, nothing will shield even their faces from the Hellfire:

﴿تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهُهُمْ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ﴾ (١٠٤)

"The Fire will burn their faces, and therein they will grin, with displaced lips (disfigured)." (Qur'an 23: 104)

c) They will be dragged.

One of the punishments that the denizens of Hell will be subjected to is that they will be dragged on their faces in the Hellfire. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ﴾ (٤٧) *يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُقُوا مَسَ سَفَرٍ* (٤٨)

"Verily, the Mujrimoon (polytheists, disbelievers, sinners, criminals, etc.) are in error (in this world) and will burn (in the Hellfire in the Hereafter). The Day they will be dragged in the Fire on their faces (it will be said to them): "Taste you the touch of

Hell!’’ (Qur’an 54: 47, 48)

That they are chained with iron collars over their necks indicates that the pain they will feel from being dragged on their faces will intensify:

﴿الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآلِ كَتَبٍ وَبِمَا أَرْسَلْنَا بِهِ رُسُلَنَا فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ إِذِ الْأَغْطَالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلْسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ فِي الْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

“Those who deny the Book (this Qur’an), and that with which We sent Our Messengers (i.e., to worship none but Allah Alone sincerely, and to reject all false deities and to confess resurrection after the death for recompense) they will come to know (when they will be cast into the Fire of Hell). When iron collars will be rounded over their necks, and the chains, they shall be dragged along. In the boiling water, then they will be burned in the Fire.” (Qur’an 40: 70-72)

d) Their faces will be blackened.

In the Hereafter, Allah ﷻ will cause the faces of Hell’s denizens to turn extremely black, so that it will seem as if the darkness of the night has settled on their faces. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَسَبُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ جَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ يَمْثِلُهَا وَتَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ مَّا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنَّ عَاصِرٍ كَأَنَّمَا أَغْشِيَتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ قِطْعًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مُظْلِمًا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

“And those who have earned evil deeds, the recompense of an evil deed is the like thereof, and humiliating disgrace will cover them (their faces). No defender will they have from Allah. Their faces will be covered, as it were, with pieces from the darkness of night. They are dwellers of the Fire, they will abide therein forever.” (Qur’an 10: 27)

e) The Hellfire will encompass them.

Since the sins of a disbeliever encompass him like a bracelet around a wrist, and since the reward should be appropriate to the deed, the Hellfire will encompass him from all directions. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَهُمْ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ وَمِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ غَوَاشٍ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ٤١﴾

“Theirs will be a bed of Hell (Fire), and over them coverings (of Hellfire). Thus do We recompense the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.).” (Qur’an 7: 41)

What this means is that the Hellfire will encompass them from both beneath and above. Allah ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿يَوْمَ يَغْشَاهُمْ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَيَقُولُ ذُوقُوا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ٥٥﴾

“On the Day when the torment (Hellfire) shall cover them from above them and from underneath their feet, and it will be said : “Taste what you used to do.” (Qur’an 29: 55)

And in yet another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهُ بِهِ عِبَادَهُ ۚ يَعْبَادُونَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ١٦﴾

“They shall have coverings of Fire, above them and covering (of Fire) beneath them ; with this Allah does frighten His slaves : “O My slaves, therefore fear Me!” (Qur’an 39: 16)

Elsewhere in the Qur’an, Allah ﷻ made a more explicit mention of how the Hellfire will encompass the disbelievers, explaining that the Hellfire has walls that surround the disbelievers, so that they are not able to leave:

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ ۖ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ ۚ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا ۚ وَإِنْ يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ ۚ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ٢٩﴾

"And say : "The truth is from your Lord ." Then whosoever wills, let him believe, and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We have prepared for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water like boiling oil, that will scald their faces. Terrible the drink, and an evil Murtafaqa (dwelling, resting place, etc.).!" (Qur'an 18: 29)

f) The Hellfire will leap up over their hearts:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كَلَّا لَيُبَدِّلَنَ فِي الْخُطْمَةِ ۙ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْخُطْمَةُ ۙ﴾ نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْفِدَةُ ﴿٦﴾ أَلَّتِي تَطْلُعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ ﴿٧﴾ ﴿٤﴾

"Nay! Verily, he will be thrown into the crushing Fire. And what will make you know what the crushing Fire is? The fire of Allah, kindled, which leaps up over the hearts." (Qur'an 104: 4-7)

g) The fetters, chains, and collars that will restrain them in the Hellfire.

Allah ﷻ has prepared iron chains and collars for the people of the Hellfire:

﴿إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَلَاسِلًا وَأَغْلَالًا وَسَعِيرًا ۙ﴾ ﴿٤﴾

"Verily, We have prepared for the disbelievers iron chains, iron collars, and a blazing Fire." (Qur'an 76: 4)

﴿إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَحِمِيمًا ۙ وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۙ﴾ ﴿١٣﴾

"Verily, with Us are fetters (to bind them), and a raging Fire. And a food that chokes, and a painful torment." (Qur'an 73: 12, 13)

Iron collars will be placed around their necks:

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعِفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا بَلْ مَكْرُ الْأَيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذْ تَأْمُرُونَا

أَنْ تَكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَتَجْعَلَ لَهُ أَنْدَادًا وَأَسْرُوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَغْلَلَ فِي آعْنَاقِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ يُحْزَنُونَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

“Those who were deemed weak will say to those who were arrogant: “Nay, but it was your plotting by night and day, when you ordered us to disbelieve in Allah and set up rivals to Him!” And each of them (parties) will conceal their own regrets (for disobeying Allah during this worldly life), when they behold the torment. And We shall put iron collars round the necks of those who disbelieved. Are they requited aught except what they used to do?” (Qur’an 34: 33)

﴿إِذِ الْأَغْلَلَ فِي آعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلْسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ﴾ (٧)

“When iron collars will be rounded over their necks, and the chains, they shall be dragged along.” (Qur’an 40: 71)

Just as criminals are tied up in this world:

﴿إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَحِمَامًا﴾

“Verily, with Us are fetters (to bind them), and a raging Fire.” (Qur’an 73: 12)

Criminals in the Hereafter will be tied up as well, except with sturdier, tighter, longer – and generally more terrifying chains. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ۖ ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ۖ ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ۚ﴾ (٣٢)

“(It will be said): “Seize him and fetter him; then throw him in the blazing Fire. Then fasten him with a chain whereof the length is seventy cubits!” (Qur’an 69: 30-32)

h) A disbeliever will be united in the Hellfire with the false deity that he worshipped and with his companion from the devils.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَرَدُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾ لَوْ كَانَتْ هَتُولَاءَ إِلَهَةً مَا وَرَدُوهَا وَكُلٌّ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾﴾

“Certainly! You (disbelievers) and that which you are worshipping now besides Allah, are (but) fuel for Hell! (Surely), you will enter it. Had these (idols, etc.) been aliha (gods), they would not have entered there (Hell), and all of them will abide therein.” (Qur’an 21: 98, 99)

And in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُهُتَدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُمَا قَالَ يَلَيْتَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ بَعْدَ الْمُسْرِفَيْنِ فِتْنَسَ الْفَرِينِ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَلَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ إِذْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾﴾

“And whosoever turns away (blinds himself) from the remembrance of the Most Beneficent (Allah) (i.e., this Qur’an and worship of Allah), We appoint for him Shaitaan (Satan – devil) to be a Qarin (an intimate companion) to him. And verily, they (Satans/devils) hinder them from the Path (of Allah), but they think that they are guided aright! Till, when (such a one) comes to Us, he says [to his Qarin (Satan/devil companion)] “Would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts (or the east and west)” – a worst (type of) companion (indeed)! It will profit you not this Day (O you who turn away from Allah’s Remembrance and His worship, etc.) as you did wrong, (and) that you will be sharers (you and your Qarin) in the punishment.” (Qur’an 43: 36-39)

i) Their grief, regret, and supplication.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِكُلِّ نَفْسٍ ظَلَمَتْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لَافْتَدَتْ بِهِ ۖ وَأَسْرُوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ ۖ وَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

"And if every person who had wronged (by disbelieving in Allah and by worshipping others besides Allah), possessed all that is on earth, and sought to ransom himself therewith (it will not be accepted), and they would feel in their hearts regret when they see the torment, and they will be judged with justice, and no wrong will be done unto them." (Qur'an 10: 54)

When the disbeliever looks at his scroll of deeds, when he sees in it the disbelief that qualifies him for eternity in the Hellfire, he will supplicate for his own destruction:

﴿وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا ثُبُورًا ۝۱۱ وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ۝۱۲﴾

"But whosoever is given his Record behind his back, he will invoke (his) destruction, and shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning." (Qur'an 84: 10-12)

Then again, when he is thrown into the Hellfire, he will invoke for his own destruction:

﴿وَإِذَا أُلْقُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُّقَرَّنِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا ۝۱۳ لَا تَدْعُوا الْيَوْمَ ثُبُورًا وَاحِدًا وَّادْعُوا ثُبُورًا كَثِيرًا ۝۱۴﴾

"And when they shall be thrown into a narrow place thereof, chained together, they will exclaim therein for destruction. Exclaim not today for one destruction, but exclaim for many destructions." (Qur'an 25: 13, 14)

When inside the Hellfire, he will scream loudly and wail pathetically, but he will also invoke his Lord, hoping that He will take him out of the Hellfire:

﴿وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِّحُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ۖ أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ ۝۳۷﴾

"Therein they will cry: "Our Lord! Bring us out, we shall do righteous good deeds, not (the evil deeds) that we used to do."

(Allah will reply): "Did We not give you lives long enough, so that whosoever would receive admonition, – could receive it? And the warner came to you. So taste you (the evil of your deeds). For the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) there is no helper." (Qur'an 35: 37)

He will, at that time, fully acknowledge his disbelief, his foolish deeds, and the sorry use he made of his mind:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ١٠﴾

"And they will say: "Had we but listened or used our intelligence, we would not have been among the dwellers of the blazing Fire!" (Qur'an 67: 10)

But his excuses and pledges of reform will be too little, too late. His requests will be rejected with a sense of finality and severity that will cause all hopes of a better condition to vanish from his heart. He will be given an answer that shows him his true worth:

﴿قَالُوا رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ ١٠٦ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ١٠٧﴾ قَالَ أَخْسَرُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تَكْلُمُونَ ١٠٨﴾

"They will say: "Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people. Our Lord! Bring us out of this; if ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be Zaalimoon: (polytheists, oppressors, unjust, and wrongdoers, etc.)." He (Allah) will say: "Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!" (Qur'an 23: 106-108)

Because of his disbelief on earth, there is no return from the destination he will have reached: supplication will be useless and hope will never again be of any avail.

﴿وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُوا رُءُوسِهِمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَا أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ ١٢﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى وَلَٰكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ١٣﴾ فَذُوقُوا

يَمَّا نَسِيْتُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا إِنَّا نَسِينَكُمُ وَدُفِقُوا عَذَابِ الْخُلْدِ يَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

“And if you only could see when the Mujrimoon (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, etc.) shall hang their heads before their Lord (saying): “Our Lord! We have now seen and heard, so send us back (to the world), we will do righteous good deeds. Verily! We now believe with certainty.” And if We had willed, surely! We would have given every person his guidance, but the Word from Me took effect (about evildoers), that I will fill Hell with jinn and mankind together. Then taste you (the torment of the Fire) because of your forgetting the Meeting of this Day of yours, (and) surely! We too will forget you, so taste you the abiding torment for what you used to do.” (Qur’an 32: 12-14)

He and the other denizens of Hell will no longer address Allah ﷻ, but will instead implore the custodians of Hell to help them, to intercede on their behalf, so that Allah ﷻ will reduce for them their punishment.

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ فِي النَّارِ لِخَزَنَةِ جَهَنَّمَ ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ يُخَفِّفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ ۖ قَالُوا أَوَلَمْ نَكُ نَأْتِيَكُم رُّسُلًا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَالُوا فَادْعُوا وَمَا دُعَاتُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ ۖ﴾ ﴿٥٠﴾

“And those in the Fire will say to the keepers (angels) of Hell: “Call upon your Lord to lighten for us the torment for a day!” They will say: “Did there not come to you, your Messengers with (clear) evidences and signs? They will say: “Yes.” They will reply: “Then call (as you like)! And the invocation of the disbelievers is nothing but in error!” (Qur’an 40: 49-50)

They will then invoke Maalik, the custodian of Hell, asking for their destruction, so that, if their situation cannot improve as long as they remain alive, at least their punishment will come to an end. But Maalik’s answer will only confirm their worst fear:

﴿وَنَادُوا يَمْلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَرْكُوتٌ ۖ﴾ (٧٧) لَقَدْ جِئْتَكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَارِهُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

"And they will cry: "O Maalik (Keeper of Hell)! Let your Lord make an end of us." He will say: "Verily you shall abide forever." Indeed We have brought the truth (Muhammad ﷺ) with the Qur'an), - to you, but most of you have a hatred for the truth." (Qur'an 43: 77, 78)

By choosing disbelief over belief, the disbelievers lose their own selves and their families. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَلَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْخَسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ ۝﴾ (١٥)

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "The losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection. Verily, that will be a manifest loss!" (Qur'an 39: 15)

As we have seen from the previous two sections, Makkan Verses of the Qur'an trained Muslims to hope for Allah's reward and to fear His punishment. Like the eternal bliss of Paradise, the punishment of Hell is real, both in the physical and mental sense. Based on the descriptions they found in the Qur'an and heard from the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions ﷺ constantly pictured the gardens of Paradise and the pits of the Hellfire; needless to say, such constant visualization had a profound effect on their characters. They made preparations for death, knowing fully well that it is an inevitable end for all human life in this world, that they will all be questioned as individuals, and that the grave is either a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of Hell. When a given Companion ﷺ reflected on these realities, he feared Allah ﷻ in his heart, and he went about his daily activities with the knowledge that Allah ﷻ has full knowledge of all his doings. This knowledge would prompt him to invoke Allah ﷻ openly and secretly, asking Him ﷻ to

honour him with the companionship of the Prophets ﷺ, the truthful ones, the martyrs, and the righteous ones.

These days, those who are striving to improve the state of our nation need to understand with the same intelligence and visualize with the same clearness the realities of the Hereafter – of Paradise and Hell. It is only then that the Muslim nation can regain its honour and status among the nations.

Faith In Divine Preordainment (Al-Qadaa Wal-Qadr)

Many Makkan Verses of the Qur'an focus on faith in Divine Preordainment. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾ (٤٩)

"Verily, We have created all things with Qadar (Divine Preordainments of all things before their creation, as written in the Book of Decrees – Al-Lauh AL-Mahfooz)." (Qur'an 54: 49)

And in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ بَعْدَ إِعْدَادِهِ﴾ (٢)

"He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and Who has begotten no son (children or offspring) and for Whom there is no partner in the dominion. He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements." (Qur'an 25: 2)

The Prophet ﷺ would teach his Companions ﷺ about Divine Preordainment, explaining to them that Allah ﷻ has already decreed all that happens in this world. And the Noble Qur'an clarified for them the four levels or aspects of Divine Preordainment:

- 1) Allah's knowledge is comprehensive of all things, which of course includes events that happened in the past, that are happening now, and that will happen in the future. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُوا مِنْهُ مِنْ قُرْآنٍ وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّكَ مِنْ مِثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١١﴾﴾

"Whatever you (O Muhammad ﷺ) may be doing, and whatever portion you may be reciting from the Qur'an, – and whatever deed you (mankind) may be doing (good or evil), We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it. And nothing is hidden from your Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom (or small ant) on the earth or in the heaven. Nor what is less than that or what is greater than that but is (written) in a Clear Record." (Qur'an 10: 61)

- 2) Even before creating mankind, Allah ﷻ wrote down everything that was to happen:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَرَهُمْ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

"Verily, We give life to the dead, and We record that which they send before (them), and their traces [their footsteps and walking on the earth with their legs to the mosques for the five compulsory congregational prayers, Jihaad (holy fighting in Allah's Cause), and all other good and evil they did, and that which they leave behind], and all things We have recorded with numbers (as a record) in a Clear Book." (Qur'an 36: 12)

- 3) Whatever Allah ﷻ wills, happens; He ﷻ has power over all things. So no matter how hard one tries to ward off *Al-Qadr*, and no matter how many people work as a team to do the same, what Allah ﷻ has decreed will certainly come to pass. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَكُنُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعْجِزَهُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا ﴿١٣﴾﴾

"Have they not traveled in the land, and seen what was the end of those before them, and they were superior to them in power? Allah is not such that anything in the heavens or in the earth escapes Him. Verily, He is All-Knowing, All-Omnipotent."
(Qur'an 35: 44)

4) Allah ﷻ is the Creator of all things:

﴿ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَأَعْبُدُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ﴾ (١٠٢)

"Such is Allah, your Lord! La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone), and He is the Wakil (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian, etc.) over all things." (Qur'an 6: 102)

Having strong faith in Divine Preordainment bore many fruits for the Companions ﷺ – in terms of an improvement in character, blessings in this world, and reward in the Hereafter. If we too have faith in Divine Preordainment, we will, *In Sha Allah*, enjoy the same fruits and blessings, some of which are as follows:

- 1) The fulfillment of one's duty to worship Allah ﷻ: By having faith in Divine Preordainment – one of the six pillars of *Eemaan* – and by acting according to the implications of that faith, one is worshipping Allah ﷻ, which is the purpose for which mankind was created.
- 2) Faith in Divine Preordainment helps save one from *Shirk* (associating partners with Allah in worship). One who believes in Divine Preordainment believes that only Allah ﷻ can harm or benefit, honour or humiliate, raise or demote. This knowledge helps the believer to stay far away from *Shirk*.
- 3) A person who correctly believes in Divine Preordainment becomes brave and courageous, since he knows that he will not die when another person wants him to die, but only when Allah ﷻ has decreed for him to die.

- 4) Patience and a willingness to endure hardships for future rewards: When one believes in Divine Preordainment, one knows for certain that the tests of life ultimately come not from one's antagonists or from a random series of coincidences, but instead from Allah ﷻ. With this knowledge and belief, the true believer knows that, if he patiently endures the trials and hardships of life, Allah ﷻ will reward him with a reward that is much greater than the patience and sacrifices that are required of him; on the other hand, when one believes that the tests and trials of life are random coincidences, one won't feel that one has a strong reason to be patient and endure hardships with steadfastness.
- 5) A restful, peaceful heart: When one knows that it is upon him to strive and that it is for Allah ﷻ to decree results, one will not feel restless or agitated when things go contrary to his plans. Such a person knows that Allah ﷻ is Most Merciful and Most Just; therefore, whatever He ﷻ decrees for His slaves is what is best for them. A heart and mind that are at peace is what every person desires, but only those who have faith in Divine Preordainment can achieve that sense of peace to its fullest degree; and since the Companions ﷺ had stronger faith than those who came after them – in all of the pillars of *Eemaan*, Divine Preordainment included – it follows that they had a greater degree of peace of mind.
- 6) Contentment, self-dignity, and freedom from servitude to created beings: A believer of Divine Preordainment knows that his sustenance is in the Hand of Allah ﷻ, Who provides for him and is sufficient for him. He also knows that he will not die until he receives in full amount the sustenance that Allah ﷻ has decreed for him. So no matter how hard it is that others try to provide him with or prevent him from sustenance, they will only be able to do that which Allah ﷻ has decreed for them to do. A sense of contentment is the resultant of such knowledge. Rather than hope for help from another human being, the believer expects and hopes for help from Allah ﷻ alone. The

fruits of having faith in Divine Preordainment are many; the few I have mentioned here are meant only as examples and not as a comprehensive list.

In cultivating the beliefs and manners of his Companions ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ did not solely teach them about the six pillars of *Eemaan*. He ﷺ also cultivated their outlook and views on many issues – such as the beliefs they held about man, life, and the universe. The overall purpose of the Prophet's teachings was to make human beings perceive their purpose in life, to truly fulfill the duties that Allah ﷻ charged them with, and to achieve freedom from false notions and beliefs.

The Companions ﷺ Understood The Reality Of Man's Worth And Role In The Universe

After it acquainted man with his Lord, the Noble Qur'an also acquainted man with his own self, by answering some questions that occur naturally to man, such as: where did I come from? And, where am I heading? Questions such as these occur with a great sense of urgency in all human beings.

The Noble Qur'an clarified the reality of man's development – what he came from, where he will be returning, what is required from him in life, and where his destination is after death. The Companions ﷺ learned that the original makeup of man is water and clay; they learned about their early development from male sperm; and they learned about their status and noble ranking with their Lord – for did not Allah ﷻ honour mankind over other kinds of created beings, and did not Allah ﷻ order the angels to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ? They understood from what they learned that man must be in a state of equilibrium between a lower and higher extreme: Because of his status and nobility, man should see himself as being dignified, but because of his beginnings – from male sperm – he should be humble, and he should glorify the One Who raised him from those beginnings to the heights of honour and nobility. With this understanding, one

becomes saved from pride, arrogance, and conceitedness; yet at the same time one's honour and nobility prevent one from showing servitude of any kind to anyone other than Allah ﷻ. Had Allah ﷻ left man without guidance, man would have developed a great deal of misunderstanding about his own self, by thinking of himself as being either too great or too small and vile; in fact, many people have gone to these two extremes, simply because they do not follow divine guidance.

The way in which man perceives himself, his status, his purpose, and his role in the universe obviously has a great impact on his character. Since man was created, he has misunderstood himself, sometimes giving himself more importance than he is worthy of, and sometimes considering himself to be more unimportant and unworthy than he really is. When the former happens, he thinks that he is at the center of the universe and that he is great. As Allah ﷻ informs us in the Qur'an, this is what happened to the people of 'Ad:

﴿فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا
أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

"As for 'Ad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: "Who is mightier than us in strength?" See they not that Allah, Who created them was mightier in strength than them. And they used to deny Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, revelations, etc.)!" (Qur'an 41: 15)

The same happened to Fir'aun:

﴿فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى ﴿٢٤﴾﴾

"Saying: "I am your lord, most high." (Qur'an 79: 24)

People who overestimate their worth think that they are far too great to be held accountable by anyone. On the other extreme, man sometimes thinks himself to be the most unworthy creature in the universe. He then begins to bow his head down before trees, rocks, rivers, mountains, or animals; he thinks that the only

way he can achieve safety in this life is to perform prostration to the moon or to the sun.

In the Noble Qur'an, Allah ﷻ clearly mentioned that the reality of man returns to two origins, one that took place long ago, which refers to when man was first created from clay; and one that took place recently, and it continues to take place with the birth of every human being, and this refers to man's creation from male semen. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَقًّا ۖ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنسَانِ مِن طِينٍ ۖ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِن سُلَالَةٍ مِّن مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ ۚ ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِيٍّ ۖ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ۝٩﴾

"Who made everything He has created good, and He began the creation of man from clay. Then He made his offspring from semen of worthless water (male and female sexual discharge). Then He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him the soul (created by Allah for that person), and He gave you hearing (ears), sight (eyes), and hearts). Little is the thanks you give!" (Qur'an 32: 7-9)

Verses that contain a similar meaning abound in the Qur'an.

The Qur'an also abounds with mention of how Allah ﷻ honoured mankind; such Verses had a most salutary effect on the minds of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. The Qur'an mentions different ways in which Allah ﷻ honoured mankind:

- 1) Allah ﷻ bestowed honour upon man by creating him with His own two Hands:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّي خَلَقْتُ بَشَرًا مِّن طِينٍ ۖ (٧١) فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ۖ (٧٢) فَسَجَدَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ (٧٣) إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ ۖ اسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۖ (٧٤) قَالَ يٰٓإِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإِيْدِي ۖ اسْتَكْبَرْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ ۖ (٧٥)﴾

“(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels: “Truly, I am going to create man from clay.” So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him (his) soul created by Me, then you fall down prostrate to him.” So the angels prostrated themselves, all of them: Except Iblis (Satan) he was proud and was one of the disbelievers. (Allah) said: “O Iblis (Satan)! What prevents you from prostrating yourself to one whom I have created with Both My Hands. Are you too proud (to fall prostrate to Adam) or are you one of the high exalted?” (Qur’an 38: 71-75)

In these Verses, Allah ﷻ points to the lofty ranking of the soul that resides in man. After He ﷻ created the first man, Allah ﷻ honoured him with a great welcome from the company of angels, commanding the angels to perform prostration to him:

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْتَكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُن مِّنَ السَّاجِدِينَ﴾ ⑪

“And surely, We created you (your father Adam) and then gave you shape (the noble shape of a human being), then We told the angels, “Prostrate to Adam,” and they prostrated, except Iblis (Satan), he refused to be of those who prostrate.” (Qur’an 7: 11)

- 2) Allah ﷻ has created man upon a beautiful form that is justly proportioned:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُوَرَكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ﴾ ③

“He has created the heavens and the earth with truth, and He shaped you and made good your shapes, and to Him is the final Return.” (Qur’an 64: 3)

﴿لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ﴾ ④

“Verily, We created man of the best stature (mould).” (Qur’an 95: 4)

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ﴿٧﴾﴾

"Who created you, fashioned you perfectly, and gave you due proportion." (Qur'an 82: 7)

- 3) Allah ﷻ bestowed upon man, among other countless blessings, intelligence, speech, and the ability to make sound judgment:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ ﴿١﴾ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ﴿٢﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ﴿٣﴾ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ﴿٤﴾﴾

"The Most Beneficent (Allah)! Has taught (you mankind) the Qur'an (by His Mercy). He created man. He taught him eloquent speech." (Qur'an 55: 1-4)

- 4) Allah ﷻ has made what is in the heavens and the earth to be of use and of benefit to mankind. After He ﷻ created man, Allah ﷻ honoured him with innumerable blessings. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَتَيْنَكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا ﴿٣٤﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾

"And He gave you of all that you asked for, and if you count the Blessings of Allah, never will you be able to count them. Verily! Man is indeed an extreme wrong-doer, – a disbeliever (an extreme ingrate, denies Allah's Blessings by disbelief, and by worshipping others besides Allah, and by disobeying Allah and His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ)." (Qur'an 14: 34)

The sun, the moon, the stars, or more generally put, the wonderful system upon which Allah ﷻ created all things is for the service and benefit of mankind; this includes, for example, the succession of day and night, the changing of seasons, and the increase and decrease of temperatures. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾﴾

"And He has subjected to you the night and the day, the sun and the moon; and the stars are subjected by His Command. Surely, in this are proofs for people who understand." (Qur'an 16: 12)

﴿وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾ (١٣)

"And has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth; it is all as a favour and kindness from Him. Verily, in it are signs for a people who think deeply." (Qur'an 45: 13)

- 5) Allah ﷻ has clearly favoured mankind over many of those that He ﷻ has created:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا﴾ (٧٠)

"And indeed We have honoured the Children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with At-Tayyibaat (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference." (Qur'an 17: 70)

- 6) Allah ﷻ blessed man by sending Messengers to him. His Messengers ﷺ guide mankind to ultimate success in this world and the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ أَهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَى﴾ (١٣٣)

"(Allah) said: "Get you down (from the Paradise to the earth), both of you, together, some of you are an enemy to some others. Then if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My Guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into distress and misery." (Qur'an 20: 123)

In another Verse, He ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ يَتَّيِبُهَا النَّاسُ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ
الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He); It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad ﷺ) who believes in Allah and His Words [(this Qur’an), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and also Allah’s Word: “Be!” – and he was i.e., Allah’s Word: “Be!” – and he was, i.e., Iesa (Jesus ﷺ) son of Maryam (Mary ﷺ), and follow him so that you may be guided.” (Qur’an 7: 158)

Through the guidance of Allah’s Messengers, man is freed from servitude to false idols, false deities, and other human beings; he remains a slave of Allah alone. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ
فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

“And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): “Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taghoot (all false deities, etc., i.e., do not worship Taghoots besides Allah).” Then of them were some whom Allah guided and of them were some upon whom the straying was justified. So travel through the land and see what was the end of those who denied (the truth).” (Qur’an 16: 36)

- 7) Allah’s love for man – if man is worthy of His love – and His mention of man in the highest of gatherings: One of the greatest of ways in which Allah ﷻ has bestowed honour

upon man is by making him worthy of His love and Good Pleasure. In the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ has guided man to the truths he needs to believe in, the deeds he needs to perform, and the qualities he needs to adopt in order to make himself qualified and worthy of Allah's love. The first of these is to follow the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in what he ﷺ invited mankind to follow; one who does so will achieve a good life in this world and eternal bliss in the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾﴾

"Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment, and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e., Paradise in the Hereafter)." (Qur'an 16: 97)

- 8) Another way in which Allah ﷻ bestowed honour upon man is by caring for him and protecting him from harm:

﴿إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ﴾

"When the heaven shall be cleft asunder." (Qur'an 82: 10)

To this end, Allah ﷻ has appointed angels over every single human being:

﴿إِن كُلَّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾

"There is no human being but has a protector over him (or her) (i.e., angels in charge of each human being, guarding him, writing his good and bad deeds, etc.)" (Qur'an 86: 4)

These are but a few of the many ways in which Allah ﷻ has bestowed honour upon man.

What The Companions ﷺ Learned From The Story Of Adam ﷺ And Iblis

The story of Adam ﷺ and Iblis sheds light on the nature of the struggle between man and his archenemy, the Devil (*Shaitaan*), who tempted his father before him. The Companions ﷺ learned about the various facets of this story through a number of Verses in the Qur'an. For example, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَبْنَىْ ءَادَمَ لَا يَفْنَنَكُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ كَمَا اَخْرَجَ اٰبَوَيْكُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَزْعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسُهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْءَتَهُمَا ؕ اِنَّهُ يَرٰكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ ؕ اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِيْنَ اَوْلِيَآءَ لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾﴾

“O Children of Adam! Let not Shaitaan (Satan) deceive you, as he got your parents [Adam and Hawwa (Eve)] out of Paradise, stripping them of their raiments, to show them their private parts. Verily, he and Qabiluh (his soldiers from the jinns or his tribe) see you from where you cannot see them. Verily, We made the Shayaatin (devils) Auliya’ (protectors and helpers) for those who believe not.” (Qur’an 7: 27)

And in other Verses of the same Chapter, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ اَنْظِرْنِيْ اِلٰى يَوْمٍ يُبْعَثُوْنَ ﴿٤﴾ قَالَ اِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِيْنَ ﴿٥﴾ قَالَ فَيَمَّا اَعُوْثِيْ لَاَقْعُدَنَّ هُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمَسْتَقِيْمَ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ لَاَنْبِتُهُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ اَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ وَلَا تَجِدُ اَكْثَرَهُمْ شٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

“(Iblis) said: “Allow me respite till the Day they are raised up (i.e., the Day of Resurrection).” (Allah) said: “You are of those allowed respite.” (Iblis) said: “Because You have sent me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them (human beings) on Your Straight Path. Then I will come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them as thankful ones (i.e., they will not be dutiful to You).” (Qur’an 7: 14-17)

Being that they were guided by Allah ﷻ, that they were hearing Verses of the Qur'an freshly as they were being revealed, that they had strong faith, and that they benefited from the Prophet's company, the Companions ﷺ lived as if they could see *Shaitaan*, as if he took form, coming to them from all directions and whispering evil instructions to them. Thus they strove to always be on guard, fearing an ambush from *Shaitaan* at any given moment. They performed many good deeds, which they knew would help defend them from *Shaitaan's* traps, a lesson they learned from the saying of Allah ﷻ:

﴿فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ۝٩٨ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝٩٩ إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِهِ مُشْرِكُونَ ۝١٠٠﴾

"So when you want to recite the Qur'an, seek refuge with Allah from Shaitaan (Satan), the outcast (the cursed one). Verily! He has no power over those who believe and put their trust only in their Lord (Allah). His power is only over those who obey and follow him (Satan), and those who join partners with Him (Allah, i.e., those who are Mushrikoon - polytheists)."
(Qur'an 16: 98-100)

In some parts of the Qur'an, the story of *Shaitaan* (Iblis) and Adam ﷺ is discussed in full detail – as in Sooratul-'Araaf (Chapter "The Heights," or, "The Wall With Elevations"). In other parts of the Qur'an, only partial aspects of the story are mentioned; and in yet other parts of the Qur'an, the story is mentioned only in passing – and this occurs very frequently in the Noble Qur'an. The Chapter of *Ibraaheem* is the only Chapter of the Qur'an that deals with the stance *Shaitaan* will take on the Day of Resurrection vis-à-vis the children of Adam, particularly those children of Adam who succumbed to his temptations in this world. For example, in Verse number 22 of the Chapter of *Ibraaheem*, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ وَعَدْتُكُمْ

فَاَخْلَفْتُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ اِلَّا اَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا اَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا اَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا اَنْتُمْ بِمُصْرِخِي اِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا اَشْرَكْتُمُوْنَ مِنْ قَبْلُ اِنَّ الظَّالِمِيْنَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢١﴾

“And Shaitaan (Satan) will say when the matter has been decided: “Verily, Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you, but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you except that I called you, so you responded to me. So blame me not, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I deny your former act in associating me (Satan) as a partner with Allah (by obeying me in the life of the world). Verily, there is a painful torment for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.).” (Qur’an 14: 22)

And in the Chapter of Al-‘Araaf, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَبَاَدُمْ اَسْكُنْ اَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِيْنَ ۝١٩ فَوَسَّوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْءَتَيْهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ اِلَّا اَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَئِيْنٌ اَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِيْنَ ۝٢٠ وَقَاسَمَهُمَا اِنِّي لَكُمَا لَوْنٌ النَّاصِحِيْنَ ۝٢١ فَدَلَّاهُمَا بِغُرُوبٍ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا اَنْزِلَا اَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةِ وَاَقُلْ لَكُمَا اِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِيْنٌ ۝٢٢ قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا اَنْفُسَنَا وَاِنْ لَنْ تَغْفِرَ لَنَا وَوَرَّعَمْنَا لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ۝٢٣ قَالَ اهْبِطُوْا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَّعٌ اِلٰى حِيْنٍ ۝٢٤ قَالَ فِيْهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيْهَا تَمُوْتُوْنَ وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُوْنَ ۝٢٥ يٰبَنِيْ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُّوْرِيْ سَوْءَ بَعْضِكُمْ رِيْسًا وَلِبَاسًا اَلْفَوْقَ ذٰلِكَ خِيْرٌ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ يَذَّكَّرُوْنَ ۝٢٦ يٰبَنِيْ اٰدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ كَمَا اَخْرَجَ اٰبَوٰنَكُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ يٰزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْءَتَهُمَا اِنَّهُمْ يَرْتَنكِبُوْنَ هُوَ وَقَبِيْلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيْطٰنِ اَوْلِيَآءَ لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝٢٧﴾

“And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise, and eat thereof as you both wish, but approach not this tree, otherwise you both will be of the Zaalimoon (unjust and wrongdoers).” Then Shaitaan (Satan) whispered suggestions to them both in order to uncover that which was hidden from them of their private parts (before); he said: “Your Lord did not forbid you this tree save you should become angels or become of the immortals.” And he [Shaitaan (Satan)] swore by Allah to them both (saying): “Verily, I am one of the sincere well-wishers for you both.” So he misled them with deception. Then when they tasted of the tree, that which was hidden from them of their shame (private parts) became manifest to them and they began to stick together the leaves of Paradise over themselves (in order to cover their shame). And their Lord called out to them (saying): “Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you: Verily, Shaitaan (Satan) is an open enemy unto you?” They said: “Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.” (Allah) said: “Get down, one of you an enemy to the other [i.e., Adam, Hawwa (Eve), and Shaitaan (Satan), etc.]. On earth will be a dwelling-place for you and an enjoyment, – for a time.” He said: “Therein you shall live, and therein you shall die, and from it you shall be brought out (i.e., resurrected).” O Children of Adam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover yourselves (screen your private parts, etc.) and as an adornment, and the raiment of the righteousness, that is better. Such are among the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah, that they may remember (i.e., leave falsehood and follow truth). O Children of Adam! Let not Shaitaan (Satan) deceive you, as he got your parents [Adam and Hawwa (Eve)] out of Paradise, stripping them of their raiments, to show them their private parts. Verily, he and Qabiluhu (his soldiers form the jinns or his tribe) see you from where you cannot see them. Verily, We made the Shayaaatin (devils) Auliya’ (protectors and helpers) for those who believe not.” (Qur’an 7: 19-27)

It is very important for a person to know his history, not so much to console himself as to learn valuable lessons. Among the stories of the Qur'an – they are all historical stories that provide valuable lessons and morals – the story of Adam ﷺ stands out with very special meanings, furnishing information to humans about their beginning; their end destination; their role and purpose on earth; their enemy – the reason for his hatred, his motives, etc.; the way in which they should journey through this world, the obstacles they will face throughout that journey, and the ways in which they can overcome those obstacles.

The Qur'anic Verses that discuss the story of Adam ﷺ and his struggle with *Shaitaan* taught the first generation of Muslims some valuable lessons, lessons that are applicable to one's outlook, beliefs, and manners. Here are some of those lessons:

- 1) Adam ﷺ is the first human being: Allah ﷻ created him from clay, immediately upon his full human form, which did not come about through gradual stages from one species to another, or from one form of creation to another. Allah ﷻ created Adam ﷺ from clay, after which He ﷻ blew into him his soul. He thus immediately became a completely formed human being, with all of his flesh, bones, and blood. This outlook is of course diametrically opposed to any of the recent false theories that atheists put forward, theories that debase humankind and that ludicrously claim that man is descended from other species of animals.
- 2) The fundamental quality of Islam is complete obedience to Allah ﷻ. When Allah ﷻ ordered the angels to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ, they did so, as a way of greeting him, honouring him, and acknowledging his status, not in obedience to Adam ﷺ, but in obedience to Allah ﷻ, Lord of all that exists. They did so without the least bit of hesitation or doubt, in spite of the fact that they were members of the highest gathering, who worshipped and glorified Allah ﷻ continuously, while Adam ﷺ had as of then done no deed or act of worship to outdo them or to ostensibly merit greater

status. So the only reason why the angels performed prostration to Adam ﷺ is that the command to do so came from Allah ﷻ, the Lord of all that exists. When Allah ﷻ makes a command, one must immediately obey, without any hesitation or opposition, and without first waiting to learn the wisdom behind the command; this is the essence of Islam, and this is the way of the Muslim. The true Muslim obeys Allah's command especially when doing so is contrary to his preconceived notions, desires, and lusts.

- 3) Every man is susceptible to falling into error: Through the story of Adam ﷺ, the Companions ﷺ gained a heightened sense of awareness about sinning, learning that man, by his very nature, is susceptible to falling into error. Allah ﷻ has made man have a natural disposition for certain desires and lusts; it is through this weakness in man that *Shaitaan* finds a way to tempt him. As is clear from the story of Adam ﷺ, one of the many intuitive desires of man is to live forever. *Shaitaan* preyed upon this weakness in Adam ﷺ:

﴿فَوَسْوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْءَ تَيْهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَائِكَةً أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ ۝٢٠﴾

"Then Shaitaan (Satan) whispered suggestions to them both in order to uncover that which was hidden from them of their private parts (before); he said: "Your Lord did not forbid you this tree save you should become angels or become of the immortals."
(Qur'an 7: 20)

He strengthened his claim in the eyes of Adam and Hawwa ﷺ when he swore by Allah ﷻ that he was a sincere advisor to them. What I stated hitherto does not mean that one should surrender to his desires and lusts; to the contrary, a Muslim must restrain his desires and lusts and limit them to what is permitted in Islam. The story of Adam ﷺ teaches Muslims about their susceptibility to sin not to validate sinning, but to heighten their awareness of their weaknesses, of their enemy, of his plots, and of the ways of

overcoming his plots. For the most part, man's desires transgress the bounds of moderation, which is why *Al-Hawa*, or desire, is disparaged; when *Al-Hawa* is disparaged, it refers to desire of the evil kind, as occurs in the following Verse:

﴿وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۖ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ۝﴾

"But as for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from impure evil desires, and lusts. Verily, Paradise will be his abode. (Qur'an 79: 40, 41)

In this Verse, *Al-Hawa* is mentioned in a general way; those who restrain themselves from *Al-Hawa* are praised because, as an Islamic term, the word *Al-Hawa*, upon being used, is primarily understood as meaning not all desire but only evil desire.

- 4) The mistake of Adam ﷺ teaches a Muslim that it is incumbent upon him to place his complete trust upon Allah ﷻ. That man is ever susceptible to falling into error, as is illustrated in the story of Adam ﷺ, inspires fear into the heart of a Muslim, thus increasing his level of dependence and reliance upon his Lord ﷻ to protect him from the evil of the accursed *Shaitaan*.

Allah ﷻ commanded the angels to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ to show his lofty status and ranking with his Lord ﷻ; He ﷻ expelled *Shaitaan* from Paradise when he refused to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ. Allah ﷻ made Adam and his wife ﷺ to inhabit Paradise, permitting them to enjoy all of the fruits and pleasures of Paradise, though giving Adam ﷺ a clear order to stay away from one particular tree. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَبَقَادُمْ أَتَكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝﴾

"And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise, and eat thereof as you both wish, but approach not this tree otherwise you both will be of the Zaalimoon (unjust and wrongdoers)." (Qur'an 7: 19)

Allah ﷻ even warned Adam and his wife     about *Shaitaan*, informing them that about his plots and deceptive ways. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ فَسَجَدُوْٓا اِلَّاۤ اِبْلِيسَ اَبٰى ۝۱۱۶ فَقُلْنَا يَنْۢبَغِیْكَ اَنْ تَهْذٰۤىۤا عَدُوَّكَ وَلِرَوْحِكَ فَلَا تُخْرِجَنَّكَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقٰی ۝۱۱۷﴾

“And (remember) when We said to the angels: ‘Prostrate yourselves to Adam.’ They prostrated (all) except Iblis (Satan), who refused. Then We said: ‘O Adam! Verily, this is an enemy to you and to your wife. So let him not get you both out of Paradise, so that you be distressed in misery.’ (Qur’an 20: 116, 117)

But in spite of that warning, *Shaitaan* ended up deceiving them, and they ate from the forbidden tree. Because of their sin, Allah ﷻ removed them from Paradise.

The mistake of Adam     inspired a sense of fear in the hearts of the Prophet’s Companions    ; they remained on their guard against their enemy, but they knew that, without help and guidance, they could not resist his evil whispers. And so they turned to Allah ﷻ, placing their complete trust in Him     and seeking His help against the accursed *Shaitaan*, whose sole occupation is to tempt man and drag him into the mires of evil and sinning. These are the meanings that the Companions     understood from the following two Verses:

﴿اِنَّ عِبَادِیْ لَیْسَ لَكَ عَلَیْهِمْ سُلْطٰنٌ وَّكَفٰیۤ رَبِّكَ وَكِیْلًا ۝۶۵﴾

“Verily! My slaves (i.e., the true believers of Islamic Monotheism), you have no authority over them. And All-Sufficient is your Lord as a Guardian.” (Qur’an 17: 65)

﴿اِنَّكُمْ لَیْسَ لَمْ سُلْطٰنٌ عَلٰی الَّذِیۡنَ ءَامَنُوْا وَعَلٰی رَبِّهِمْ یَتَوَكَّلُوْنَ ۝۹۹﴾

“Verily! He has no power over those who believe and put their trust only in their Lord (Allah).” (Qur’an 16: 99)

Therefore, the *Shaitaan* has neither influence nor power over those

whose faith in Allah ﷻ is strong; as a result of their strong faith, they are made to see and understand *Shaitaan's* plots for what they really are; their dependence upon Allah ﷻ at once strengthens them and weakens *Shaitaan*, whose limited power is no match against strong *Eemaan* (faith).

- 5) Repentance and asking Allah ﷻ for forgiveness are of paramount importance in the life of the Muslim. The Companions  learned this lesson from the story of Adam ﷺ. After they sinned, both Adam and his wife ﷺ hurried to repent to Allah ﷻ and to ask for mercy from Him. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَدَلَّهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءُهُمَا وَطَفَقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُلْتُ لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَلَا رَبَّانَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّآ تَغْفِرَ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمَنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

“So he misled them with deception. Then when they tasted of the tree, that which was hidden from them of their shame (private parts) became manifest to them and they began to stick together the leaves of Paradise over themselves (in order to cover their shame). And their Lord called out to them (saying): “Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you: Verily, Shaitaan (Satan) is an open enemy unto you?” They said: “Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.” (Qur’an 7: 22, 23)

Their repentance was accompanied by severe regret, which is understood from their saying, “We have wronged ourselves”; it was also accompanied by a sense of hope that Allah ﷻ would forgive them, which is implied in their saying, “If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.” Adam and his wife ﷺ had to repent even though they enjoyed a high ranking with their Lord; this suggests that others, who do not enjoy that status, have all the more reason to repent from their misdeeds.

- 6) The story points to two evil characteristics that Muslims must avoid adopting: Jealousy and pride. *Iblis* (*Shaitaan*) fell so low from so high because of his jealousy and pride.

Iblis was too proud to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ, thus making pride the first sin. About pride and arrogance, the Prophet ﷺ said, "He who has in his heart an atom's weight (or the weight of a small ant) of pride, will not enter Paradise."^[1] The Noble Qur'an abounds with Verses in which pride and proud people are disparaged, and in which the evil destination and outcome of proud people are clarified. The definition of pride consists of two parts:

- 1) To reject the truth, to not submit to the truth, and to be too arrogant and intransigent to accept the truth;
- 2) to look down upon people, and to feel contempt for them.

There is no greater show of rejecting the truth than refusing to obey Allah's commands; for since rejecting the truth is, by definition, the meaning of pride, there is no greater truth one can reject than one that is sent down as a command from Allah ﷻ. The Prophet's Companions ﷺ were at a safe and far distance from the diseases of jealousy and pride, the dangers of which they understood from the saying of *Iblis*, "I am better than him," a saying that is rife with feelings of pride and jealousy.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّكُمْ أَجْنَةٌ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى﴾ (٣٢)

"Those who avoid great sins and Al-Fawahish (illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) except the small faults, – Verily, your Lord is of Vast Forgiveness. He knows you well when He created you from

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Faith"; chapter, "The Prohibition of Pride." *Hadeeth* number: 91.

the earth (Adam), and when you were fetuses in your mothers' wombs. So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears Allah and keep his duty to Him [i.e., those who are Al-Muttaqoon (pious)]." (Qur'an 53: 32)

The Companions ﷺ learned from this that all human beings come from the same background and are created in the same manner; therefore, no one has the right to feel proud and superior because of his lineage; superiority results only from piety, acts of obedience, and good deeds – all of which must be performed with the intention of pleasing Allah ﷻ. *Iblis*, who fell from the heights of obedience to the lowest levels of ignominy, felt that he was superior to Adam ﷺ because of his background:

﴿خَلَقَنِي مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ﴾ (١٢)

"You created me from fire, and him You created from clay."
(Qur'an 7: 12)

- 7) From Verses that were revealed in Makkah, the Companions ﷺ repeatedly learned that *Iblis* (*Shaitaan*) is their archenemy. When *Iblis* refused to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ, Allah ﷻ cursed *Iblis* and banished him from His Mercy. From that point onwards, *Iblis* became an enemy of Adam, his wife ﷺ, and all of their descendants. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾ (٤٣)

"And surely, Hell is the promised place for them all." (Qur'an 15: 43)

In another Verse Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَكَ هَذَا الَّذِي كَرَّمْتَ عَلَيَّ لَئِنْ أَخَّرْتَنِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ لَأَحْنِكَ ذُرِّيَّتَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾ (١٦)

"[Iblis (Satan)] said: "See? This one whom You have honoured above me, if You give me respite (keep me alive) to the Day of Resurrection, I will surely seize and mislead his offspring (by

sending them astray) all but a few!" (Qur'an 17: 62)

Here, *Iblis* announced his resolve and his plan to tempt the children of Adam and lead them astray; furthermore, he asked Allah ﷻ to give him respite until the Day of Resurrection, so that he could have time to execute his plan. The following Verse also points to the severe and unmitigated enmity between *Iblis* and humankind:

﴿قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ ﴿٣٨﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾﴾

"[Iblis (Satan)] said: "O my Lord! Give me then respite till the Day they (the dead) will be resurrected." Allah said: "Then, verily, you are of those reprieved, Till the Day of the time appointed." [Iblis (Satan) said: "O my Lord! Because you misled me, I shall indeed adorn the path of error for them (mankind) on the earth, and I shall mislead them all. Except Your chosen, (guided) slaves among them." (Qur'an 15: 36-40)

Thus the Companions ﷺ believed with certainty that the nature of their relationship with *Shaitaan* is that of unmitigated hatred, which in no way can be changed to a more cordial relationship. Negotiations, peace pacts, treaties – none of these can be enacted between mankind and *Shaitaan* to bring about peace between them. In fact, *Shaitaan* is afflicted with the worst form of monomania: his one deep obsession, his *raison d'etre*, is to lead human beings astray by any means necessary. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

"When Our Torment reached them, why then did they not believe with humility? But their hearts became hardened, and Shaitaan (Satan) made fair-seeming to them that which they used to do." (Qur'an 6: 43)

As in the previous Verse, as well as the following one, *Shaitaan's* main method is to make evil deeds fair seeming in the minds of people. Allah ﷻ informed us that, when speaking about Queen Sheebah, Hudhud said to Sulaimaan ﷺ:

﴿وَجَدْتُهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ﴾ (٢٤)

"I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Shaitaan (Satan) has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allah's) Way, so they have no guidance." (Qur'an 27: 24)

For all of the above-mentioned reasons, the Companions ﷺ took *Shaitaan* to be their enemy, and thus obeyed Allah's command in this Verse:

﴿إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ﴾ (٦)

"Surely, Shaitaan (Satan) is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy. He only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire." (Qur'an 35: 6)

- 8) The Companions ﷺ learned that they had to speak to one another in the politest and best of ways, in obedience to the command of Allah ﷻ:

﴿وَقُلْ لِعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْزِعُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا﴾ (٥٣)

"And say to My slaves (i.e., the true believers of Islamic Monotheism) that they should (only) say those words that are the best. (Because) Shaitaan (Satan) verily, sows disagreements among them. Surely, Shaitaan (Satan) is to man a plain enemy." (Qur'an 17: 53)

Not only did Allah ﷻ inform Muslims that *Shaitaan* is their

archenemy; He ﷺ also told them how to protect themselves from *Shaitaan's* plots, one such plot being to sow the seeds of dissension among Muslims. So the Companions ﷺ learned that if they did not speak to one another with good and polite speech, *Shaitaan* would kindle the flames of enmity among them.

﴿إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلْإِنْسَنِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ۝٥٣﴾

"Surely, Shaitaan (Satan) is to man a plain enemy."

Because *Shaitaan* is man's plain enemy, he wants nothing more – and nothing else, for that matter – than for harm to befall him. The Prophet ﷺ trained and cultivated his Companions ﷺ to deal with people with the noblest and best of manners. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةِ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ ۝٩٦ وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ ۝٩٧ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ ۝٩٨﴾

"Repel evil with that which is better. We are Best-Acquainted with the things they utter. And say: "My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings (suggestions) of the Shayaatin (devils). And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! Lest they may attend (or come near) me." (Qur'an 23: 96-98)

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

"Repel evil with that which is better."

Means: with the best of qualities – forgiveness, politeness, kindness, and in general, noble manners. It is in this manner that one should combat a person who does evil by him, for by doing so, that person's enmity will turn into friendship, and his hatred will turn into love.

﴿وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ ۝٩٨﴾

"And I seek refuge with You, my Lord! Lest they may attend (or come near) me." (Qur'an 23: 98)

Means: I seek refuge in You, my Lord, lest they come near to me in

any of my affairs. For the very purpose of driving away the Shaitaan, Muslims are commanded to remember Allah ﷻ at the beginning of all of their affairs.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ
وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ ۚ﴾ (٣٤) وَمَا يُلْقِنَهَا إِلَّا أَلَّا
ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ۚ (٣٥) وَإِنَّمَا يَزْعُمَنَّ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ ۖ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٦﴾

“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e., Allah ordered the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily! He, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. But none is granted it (the above quality) except those who are patient, and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion (of the happiness in the Hereafter, i.e., Paradise and in this world of a high moral character). And if an evil whisper from Shaitaan (Satan) tries to turn you away (O Muhammad ﷺ) (from doing good, etc.), then seek refuge in Allah. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” (Qur’an 41: 34-36)

Allah’s saying:

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

“Repel evil with that which is better.”

Means: Defend yourself from the person who wronged you by treating him well and by showing him good manners. If one does this, then the person who wronged him will have a change of heart: As Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ﴾ (٣٦)

“He, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as

though he was a close friend." (Qur'an 41: 34)

By treating well the person who treats you badly, you will win out in the end; your acts of kindness towards him will infuse love for you in his heart, until he, with his reciprocal feelings of compassion and acts of kindness, will be as a close friend to you. Allah ﷻ then said:

﴿وَمَا يُفْلِحُهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُفْلِحُهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ﴾ (٣٥)

"But none is granted it (the above quality) except those who are patient, and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion (of the happiness in the Hereafter, i.e., Paradise and in this world of a high moral character)." (Qur'an 41: 35)

No one will apply Allah's command to do well by those who do one harm, except for one who is endowed with the quality of patience, for it is among the most difficult of things for the soul to follow this particular command. But if one does apply this command of Allah ﷻ, he will have a great share of happiness in this world and the Hereafter.

In the following Verse Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَمَّا يَزَعَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزَعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾ (٣٦)

"And if an evil whisper from Shaitaan (Satan) tries to turn you away (O Muhammad ﷺ) (from doing good, etc.), then seek refuge in Allah. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower." (Qur'an 41: 36)

What this means is that if the *Shaitaan* whispers to you, commanding you to reciprocate the harm that is done to you and to gain revenge, then seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from *Shaitaan's* evil whisperings. Unlike human beings, *Shaitaan* does not change his stance or attitude when someone tries to treat him kindly; in his mind, the only way a person can win him over is by obeying his command to disobey Allah ﷻ. Human beings, on the other

hand, are open – at least in many cases – to being won over through kind acts of affection. This is why Islam encourages Muslims to treat well those human beings who treat them badly. The *Shaitaan* too treats Muslims badly, by ordering them to do evil, but the only way they can protect themselves from his harm is to seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from *Shaitaan*'s evil. Throughout the Noble Qur'an, a clear explanation is given regarding the reality of the relationship between man and *Shaitaan*, mainly in terms of this world and how Muslims should go about protecting themselves from his evil, but also in terms of the Hereafter, as in the following Verses:

﴿وَيَرْزُقُوا اللَّهَ جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ الضَّعَفَاءُ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنتُمْ مُغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قَالُوا لَوْ هَدَّيْنَا اللَّهُ لَهَدَيْنَاكُمْ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَجْرَعْنَا أَمْ سَبَّحْنَا مَا لَنَا مِنْ مَحْجِسٍ ﴿٢١﴾ وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ وَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

“And they all shall appear before Allah (on the Day of Resurrection) then the weak will say to those who were arrogant (chiefs): “Verily, we were following you; can you avail us anything from Allah’s Torment?” They will say: “Had Allah guided us, we would have guided you. It makes no difference to us (now) whether we rage, or bear (these torments) with patience, there is no place of refuge for us.” And *Shaitaan* (Satan) will say when the matter has been decided: “Verily, Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you, but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you except that I called you, so you responded to me. So blame me not, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I deny your former act in associating me (Satan) as a partner with Allah (by obeying me in the life of the world). Verily, there is a painful torment for the *Zaalimoon* (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.).” (Qur’an 14: 21, 22)

The Companions' Outlook On Life, The Universe, And Certain Created Beings

Before the advent of Islam, people had a confused outlook on life, both in terms of the inner reality of man and in terms of the outer world – its origins, for example. Through Verses of the Qur'an, the Prophet ﷺ educated the Companions ﷺ about the origins of the universe, and also about what will eventually happen to it:

﴿قُلْ أَنتُمْ لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ أَندَادًا ذَلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ٩ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رُوسَىٰ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا وَبَرَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَا أَفْوَاجَهَا فِي أَرْبَعَةِ أَيَّامٍ سَوَاءٍ لِّلسَّائِلِينَ ١٠ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَرْضِ ائْتِيَا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا قَالَتَا أَتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ ١١ فَفَضَّلْنَهَا سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَأَوْحَىٰ فِي كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ أَمْرَهَا وَزَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ وَحِفْظًا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ١٢﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days and you set up rivals (in worship) with Him? That is the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). He placed therein (i.e., the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e., all these four ‘days’ were equal in the length of time), for all those who ask (about its creation). Then He Istawa (rose over) towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: “Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.” They both said: “We come, willingly.” Then He completed and finished from their creation (as) seven heavens in two Days and He made in each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest (lowest) heaven with lamps (stars) to be an adornment as well as to guard (from the devils by using them as missiles against the devils). Such is the Decree of Him the All-Mighty, the All-Knower.” (Qur’an 41: 9-12)

Regarding our ignorance about how things were before the forming of galaxies, stars, and planets, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَا أَشْهَدُهُمْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلَقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذَ
الْمُضِلِّينَ عَضُدًا ۝٥١﴾

"I (Allah) made them (Iblis and his offspring) not to witness (nor took their help in) the creation of the heavens and the earth and not (even) their own creation, nor was I (Allah) to take the misleaders as helpers." (Qur'an 18: 51)

Allah ﷻ alluded, in the following Verse, to the original togetherness of the heavens and the earth, at the same time clearly mentioning some important realities about life:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَفَقَنْهُمَا
وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝٣٠﴾

"Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were joined together as one united piece, then We parted them? And We have made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?" (Qur'an 21: 30)

From the above-mentioned Verses from Chapter "Fussilat (Verses 9-12)," the Companions ﷺ understood that Allah ﷻ "created the earth, blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e., these four 'days' were equal in length of time)." This all occurred before the forming of the heavens.

Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said, "And He (Allah ﷻ) created the earth in two days. Then He ﷻ created the heavens, and then He rose over towards the heavens and organized them (the seven heavens) in two more days. Next, He ﷻ spread the earth – spreading it means to bring out from it water and pastures; and He ﷻ created the mountains, sands, inanimate objects, hills, and what is between them (between the heavens and the earth) in two more days. And that is the meaning of the sayings of Allah ﷻ: 'And after that He spread the earth (Qur'an 79: 30),' and, 'He created the earth in two days.' The earth and what is in it was made in four days, and the

heavens were created in two days.”^[1]

The Qur'an discusses in length some realities about the sun, moon, stars, mountains, etc. – to teach people about the realities of life and the universe, to stimulate them into contemplating the Creator of the universe, and to remind them about Allah's countless favours upon them. In regard to the seas, Allah ﷻ referred to sea vessels and the sustenance that is found underneath the surface of the seas. When He ﷻ discussed weather, He ﷻ referred to the winds, the clouds, rain, lightning, and thunder. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَّحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَيَسْطُرُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ وَيَجْعَلُهُمْ كِسْفًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ فَإِذَا أَصَابَ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ﴾ (٤٨)

“Allah is He Who sends the winds, so they raise clouds, and spread them along the sky as He wills, and then break them into fragments, until you see rain drops come forth from their midst! Then when He has made them fall on whom of His slaves as He will, lo! They rejoice!” (Qur'an 30: 48)

And Allah ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿وَأَرْسَلْنَا الرِّيَّحَ لَوَاقِحَ فَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمُوهُ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ لَهُ بِخَازِنِينَ﴾ (٢٢)

“And We send the winds fertilizing (to fill heavily the clouds with water), then caused the water (rain) to descend from the sky, and We gave it to you to drink, and it is not you who are the owners of its stores (i.e., to give water to whom you like or to withhold it from whom you like).” (Qur'an 15: 22)

In the Noble Qur'an, Allah ﷻ also informed us about certain animals, with facts that are not less important than the facts

[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, “The Book of Tafseer”; chapter, “Soorah Haameem As-Sajdah or Soorah ‘Fussilat.’” Hadeeth number: 4815.

mentioned about the universe at large. At times in the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ directs our attention to the many ways in which He ﷻ has subjected animals to our use – as riding animals, as beasts of burden, as food, as clothing. In short, Allah ﷻ has subjected animals to our use and benefit. With the advent of Islam, the Companions ﷺ, who prior to Islam had a very confused understanding about the world they lived in, now understood and appreciated to a great extent the fact that the universe was very ordered. They knew that, whether they could always discern it or not, there was wisdom behind Allah's creation. The Qur'an encouraged this line of thought, guiding them to reflect on the universe and the created beings that reside in it. The Qur'an established for them the fact that, though they could not understand how, all of creation, both alive beings and inanimate objects, glorified Allah ﷻ:

﴿نُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ
وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا﴾ ٤٤

"The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him and there is not a thing but glorifies His Praise. But you understand not their glorification. Truly, He is Ever Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving." (Qur'an 17: 44)

The Qur'an reminds us of the many ways in which animals are subjected for our benefit and well-being, mainly to remind us that we should therefore be thankful to the One Who made animals so serviceable to us in our day to day lives. Had not animals, by the very nature upon which Allah ﷻ created them, been so subservient to our needs, we would not have been able to use them for our benefit. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَا أَنْعَمًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مَالِكُونَ
وَذَلَّلْنَاهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَهُمْ فِيهَا مَتَّفِعٌ وَمَشَارِبٌ أَفَلَا
يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

“Do they not see that We have created for them of what Our Hands have created, the cattle, so that they are their owners. And We have subdued them unto them so that some of them they have for riding and some they eat. And they have (other) benefits from them (besides), and they get (milk) to drink, will they not then be grateful?” (Qur’an 36: 71-73)

The Qur’an also turned our attention to the issue of how animals get their sustenance. Man thinks and plans of ways to earn his livelihood, and then when, through whatever means, he manages to gain sustenance, he thinks about saving it and hoarding it away for the future. As for animals, they are not endowed with the same abilities of thinking and planning. Yet they gain their sustenance because it is Allah ﷻ, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise, Who provides for them the means to survive. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَايْنٍ مِّن دَابَّةٍ لَا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ ٦٠﴾

“And so many a moving (living) creature there is, that carries not its own provision! Allah provides for it and for you. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” (Qur’an 29: 60)

Allah ﷻ has full knowledge of where his created beings are and of what their situation is, and regardless of their location and situation, He ﷻ provides for them. Animals find sustenance, among elsewhere, near the floor of the sea and ocean, underneath solid rock, below the earth, and in frozen wastelands. Scientists are always finding the existence of life where they previously assumed that life could not be supported. The existence of all life forms, as well as the specific situation of each living organism, is recorded with Allah ﷻ in *Al-Lauh Al-Mahfooz* (the Book of Decrees):

﴿وَمَا مِّن دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا كُلٌّ فِي
كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ ٦١﴾

“And no (moving) living creature is there on earth but its

provision is due from Allah. And He knows its dwelling place and its deposit (in the uterus, grave, etc.). All is in a Clear Book (Al-Lauh-Al-Mahfooz – the Book of Decrees with Allah)."
(Qur'an 11: 6)

The Qur'an also turns our attention to how animals, with their varied shapes, sizes, and ways of movement, are communities like human beings. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ﴾ (٣٨)

"There is not a moving (living) creature on earth, nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book, then unto their Lord they (all) shall be gathered." (Qur'an 6: 38)

The Qur'an shaped the way in which the Companions ﷺ thought about the universe, about created beings – and about the reality of life. The Prophet ﷺ continued to remind them about the reality of where they were heading after this life, convinced that whoever among them knew about the Hereafter and about the path to safety and ultimate success, would strive, with all of his energy and strength, to tread that path. In making clear to the Companions ﷺ the reality of this life, the Prophet ﷺ stressed the following points:

This life is transient in nature. And no matter how much sustenance one gains in this life, it is, in reality, a paltry, inconsequential amount. Allah ﷻ clarified these points in the following Verse:

﴿إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا آتَاهَا أَمْرًا لَّيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَبْ بِالْأَمْسِ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾ (٢٤)

"Verily the likeness of (this) worldly life is as the water (rain) which We send down from the sky, so by it arises the

intermingled produce of the earth of which men and cattle eat until when the earth is clad with its adornments and is beautified, and its people think that they have all the powers of disposal over it, Our command reaches it by night or by day and We make it like a clean-mown harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday! Thus do We explain the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, laws, etc.) in detail for the people who reflect.” (Qur’an 10: 24)

This Verse contains a number of phrases that, in their sum total, make the intended comparison complete, with each phrase acting as a vital component to the overall comparison. The two things that are being compared are this life, in terms of its impermanence and the way in which people are deceived by it, and the compounded effects of rainfall: rain is sent down, vegetation grows, people make use of what grows, but then all of that comes suddenly to an end, as in the example of the bride, who wears elegant clothing on the night of her wedding – clothing that comes about through the cycle of rain and growth – but soon her life is taken, so that it is if she had never been.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَضْرَبَ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيحُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقْتَدِرًا ۝٤٥﴾

“And put forward to them the example of the life of this world, it is like the water (rain) which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, and becomes fresh and green. But (later) it becomes dry and broken pieces, which the winds scatter. And Allah is Able to do everything.” (Qur’an 18: 45)

What “the example of the life of this world” refers to is the quickness with which life comes to an end. At first, the vegetation of the earth, which is being compared to the shortness of human life, is fresh and green, but then it very quickly becomes dry, and the wind scatters its dry pieces in all directions. And in the

particular context of this Verse, "And Allah is able to do everything," means – though it does of course also have a more general meaning – that He ﷻ is able to create and destroy.

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي
الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَأُهُ ثُمَّ يَهْبِجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ
يَكُونُ حُطَمًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ
الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

"Know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children, as the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the Hereafter (there is) a severe torment (for the disbelievers – evildoers), and (there is) Forgiveness from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure (for the believers, – good-doers), whereas the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment." (Qur'an 57: 20)

The meaning of this Verse is as follows:

The life of this world is not as it seems: Its pleasures and material accompaniments might seem important, but in reality, it is insignificant and fleeting; it is false to those who are enamored by it. It manages to have a deceptive and entrancing effect because it is *Zeenah*: Beautiful in appearance. In this world, people compete with one another, boasting over material possessions, noble lineages, and children. Just as a farmer is amazed and entranced by the process of plants growing through rain, the disbeliever is entranced by the pleasures of this world, which he ostensibly gains through his efforts. But then, just as vegetation dries up and exists no more after once having been green and fresh, the possessions of man depart from him. Since, as the previous example illustrates, this life is headed for a certain end, and since the Hereafter is approaching for certain, people need to be

warned and reminded about the Hereafter, about the two possible outcomes people face, severe punishment or forgiveness and reward: "But in the Hereafter (there is) a severe torment (for the disbelievers – evildoers), and (there is) Forgiveness from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure (for the believers, – good-doers)." Since the Hereafter is what counts – for in it, ultimate punishment will be meted out, and ultimate reward will be given – people must come to the realization that "the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment." Those who extravagantly enjoy this life are deceived into thinking that there is no other life; their being deceived is especially poignant considering the great disparity between the trifling, insignificance of this world and the consummate importance of the Hereafter."

Through the above-mentioned and other similar Verses of the Qur'an, the Companions ﷺ came to know about the reality of life in this world. Having instilled this knowledge into the minds of his Companions ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ then taught them about their religious duties and their role on earth. With guidance from the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, an understanding of life on earth, and a knowledge of the purpose of their existence, the Companions ﷺ worked day and night, without tiring, to fulfill their purpose in life, fearing no one but Allah ﷻ, and desiring neither wealth nor status. Their sole objective was to achieve happiness both for this life and the Hereafter.

One of the greatest of pitfalls that Islamic workers can fall prey to is a desire for worldly pleasures, a desire that can end up absorbing their lives. When one becomes engrossed in the pursuit of material gain in this life, he will not be satisfied when he gains something he wants; to the contrary, he will want even more, with an insatiable appetite that will never leave him satisfied. This is a pitfall that every Islamic worker – preacher, scholar, teacher, etc. – must strive hard to avoid. It must be noted, however, that it is permissible and correct for one to enjoy this life within the limits established by the *Shariah*, especially when one does so in order to become stronger for worship.

4

Laying The Foundations For Worship And Manners During The Makkan Period Of The Prophet's Life

Purifying The Souls Of The Companions ﴿﴾ Through Various Acts Of Worship

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾ ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴿﴾

“And they ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning the Rooh (the spirit); Say: “The Rooh (the spirit): it is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little.” (Qur'an 17: 85)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ﴾ ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴿﴾

“So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him (his) soul created by Me, then you fall down prostrate to him.” (Qur'an 38: 72)

And in yet another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ثُمَّ سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي وَجَعَلْتُ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ﴾ ﴿٩﴾ ﴿﴾

"Then He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him the soul (created by Allah for that person), and He gave you hearing (ears), sight (eyes) and hearts. Little is the thanks you give!" (Qur'an 32: 9)

The Prophet ﷺ trained his Companions ﷺ to purify their souls. Through various Verses of the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions ﷺ learned of ways to purify their souls, the most important of those ways being as follows:

- 1) Reflecting on the universe, Allah's created beings, and the Qur'an itself, so that they can appreciate the Greatness, Almightyness, and Wisdom of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشَىٰ اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ ۗ بَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ٥٤﴾

"Indeed your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days and then He Istawa (rose over) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and (He created) the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His command. Surely, His is the Creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)!" (Qur'an 7: 54)

- 2) Contemplating the fact that Allah's knowledge is comprehensive of all that exists in the universe, in terms of both the seen and the unseen world. Contemplation of this sort fills the soul and the heart with an appreciation of Allah's greatness and purifies the soul from doubts and disbelief. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِيحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظُلْمَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ٥٩﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم

بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

"And with Him are the keys of the Ghaib (all that is hidden), none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in (or on) the earth and in the sea; not a leaf falls, but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record. It is He, Who takes your souls by night (when you are asleep), and has knowledge of all that you have done by day, then He raises (wakes) you up again that a term appointed (your life period) be fulfilled, then in the end unto Him will be your return. Then He will inform you what you used to do." (Qur'an 6: 59, 60)

- 3) Worshipping Allah ﷻ: This is one of the most important of ways in which one purifies one's soul. Worship is the supreme form of submission, and none deserves to be worshipped but Allah ﷻ, Who said:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ
الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٍ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا
قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

"And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour." (Qur'an 17: 23)

There are two category of worship:

- The kind that is compulsory and must, according to Islamic legislation, be performed in a certain manner – such as prayer, fasting, Zakaat, and Hajj.
- The kind that is general and so comprises of a wide variety of deeds. This category comprises of deeds that one does or

abstains from and of feelings – or basically of any thought, action, or lack of action, as long as one does any of the above for Allah ﷻ, seeking His Pleasure only. So whatever one does with the intention of seeking closeness to Allah ﷻ is an act of worship, for which one will be rewarded.

It is supremely important for a Muslim to purify his soul through prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, glorification of Allah ﷻ, and remembrance of Allah ﷻ. For if one does not purify one's soul from impurities, and if one does not establish a connection with his Lord ﷻ, then one will not be strong enough to fulfill the rest of his Islamic duties. Frequently performed worship, therefore, is the fuel a person needs to become strong enough to do other Islamic duties that are required of him, a reality that is indicated in the following Verses:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْءُ الَّذِي أُتِيَ بِالْكِتَابِ لَا تَقْرَأْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۖ نَصِصَهُ ۖ أَوْ اقْصُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ۚ أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَرَتِّلْ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ۚ﴾ (١) إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۖ (٢) إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا (٣) إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْعًا وَثُونَ عَشْرًا ۖ (٤) وَادْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ۚ (٥)

“O you wrapped in garments (i.e., Prophet Muhammad ﷺ)! Stand (to pray) all night, except a little. Half of it, – or a little less than that. Or a little more; and recite the Qur'an (aloud) in a slow, (pleasing tone and) style. Verily, We shall send down to you a weighty Word (i.e., obligations, legal laws, etc.). Verily, the rising by night (for Tahajjud prayer) is very hard and most potent and good for governing (the soul), and most suitable for (understanding) the Word (of Allah). Verily, there is for you by day prolonged occupation with ordinary duties. And remember the Name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with a complete devotion.” (Qur'an 73: 1-8)

In these Verses, we learn that one should prepare for the heavy, difficult work of the day by standing up late in the night to pray. From the very early days of his Prophethood, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ strove to teach his Companions ﷺ to purify their souls

through worship. Purification of the soul and consequently worship are so important to the life of a Muslim that the Companions ﷺ would pray even when doing so threatened their lives. At first, they would pray in the mountain passes that neighboured Makkah, so as to avoid being seen by their fellow tribesmen. Then the Prophet ﷺ, knowing that the disbelievers would not allow the Muslims to pray out in the open, established a meeting place in the house of Al-Arqam, where the Muslims could go to remember Allah ﷻ and perform prayer. Had purification of the soul and worship not been of paramount importance, the Prophet ﷺ would have ordered his Companions ﷺ to abandon the prayer since praying made them vulnerable to physical torture and punishment at the hands of the Quraish.

Makkan Verses of the Qur'an encouraged Muslims to perform prayer, to stand up late in the night to pray, to remember and glorify Allah ﷻ, and to perform prayer with a presence of mind and heart – as in the following Verses:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝ ١ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ۝ ٢ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ۝ ٣ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ۝ ٤﴾

“Successful indeed are the believers. Those who offer their Salaat (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness. And those who turn away from Al-Laghw (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood, and all that Allah has forbidden). And those who pay the Zakaat.” (Qur'an 23: 1-4)

﴿إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهَا خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۝ ١٥ تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ۝ ١٦ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝ ١٧﴾

“Only those believe in Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), who, when they are reminded of them fall down prostrate, and glorify the Praises of their Lord,

and they are not proud. Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allah's Cause) out of what We have bestowed on them. No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do." (Qur'an 32: 15-17)

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبَنَّ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّاكِرِينَ﴾ (١٤) ﴿

"And perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night [i.e., the five compulsory Salaat (prayers)]. Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds (i.e., small sins). That is a reminder (an advice) for the mindful (those who accept advice)." (Qur'an 11: 114)

﴿أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا﴾ (٧٨) ﴿وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا﴾ (٧٩) ﴿

"Perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat) from mid-day till the darkness of the night (i.e., the Zuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib, and 'Isha prayers), and recite the Qur'an in the early dawn (i.e., the morning prayer). Verily, the recitation of the Qur'an in the early dawn is ever witnessed (attended by the angels in charge of mankind of the day and the night). And in some parts of the night (also) offer the Salaat (prayer) with it (i.e., recite the Qur'an in the prayer), as an additional prayer (Tahajjud optional prayer – Nawafil) for you (O Muhammad ﷺ). It may be that your Lord will raise you to Maqaman Mahmooda (a station of praise and glory, i.e., the highest degree in Paradise!)." (Qur'an 17: 78, 79)

﴿فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا وَمِنْ آنَاءِ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَأَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضَىٰ﴾ (١٣٠) ﴿وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ﴾ (١٣١) ﴿وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ

بِالصَّلَاةِ وَأَصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَسْأَلْكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَى ﴿١٣٢﴾

“So bear patiently (O Muhammad ﷺ) what they say, and glorify the praises of your Lord before the rising of the sun, and before its setting, and during some of the hours of the night, and at the sides of the day (an indication for the five compulsory congregational prayers), that you may become pleased with the reward which Allah shall give you. And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them (polytheists and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah), the splendour of the life of this world that We may test them thereby. But the provision (good reward in the Hereafter) of your Lord is better and more lasting. And enjoin As-Salaat (the prayer) on your family, and be patient in offering them [i.e., the Salaat (prayers)]. We ask not of you a provision (i.e., to give Us something : money, etc) ; We provide for you. And the good end (i.e., Paradise) is for the Muttaqoon (pious and righteous persons).” (Qur’an 20: 130-132)

﴿فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ ۝٣٩ وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَرَ الشُّجُورِ ۝٤٠﴾

“So bear with patience (O Muhammad ﷺ) all that they say, and glorify the Praises of your Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting (i.e., the Fajr, Zuhr, and ‘Asr prayers). And during a part of the night (also), glorify His Praises (i.e., Maghrib and ‘Isha prayers), and (so likewise) after the prayers (As-Sunnah, Nawafil – optional and additional prayers, and also glorify, praise and magnify Allah – Subhan Allah, Alhamdu lillah, Allahu-Akbar).” (Qur’an 50: 39, 40)

The last of the above-mentioned Verses proves that the strength one needs to deal with calamity and hardship is derived from prayer, recitation of the Qur’an, supplication, and remembrance of Allah ﷻ. Of all acts of worship, prayer has the most potent effect on purifying the soul; the following are some of the more

prominent effects that prayer had on the first generation of Muslims:

- 1) Prayer encouraged them to answer Allah's commands and gave them the opportunity to manifest their servitude and submission to Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ praised His believing slaves who answer His Call:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾ (٣٨)

“And those who answer the Call of their Lord [i.e., to believe that He is the only One Lord (Allah), and to worship none but Him Alone], and perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), and who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them.” (Qur'an 42: 38)

The meanings of true worship are not realized in a person unless he does good deeds sincerely for Allah ﷻ:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ۚ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Verily, my Salaat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims.” (Qur'an 6: 162, 163)

The Companions ؓ saw in each part of the prayer a way of manifesting their servitude and submission to Allah ﷻ, which had a profound effect on their souls. To see how this is so, consider the effects that different parts of prayer have on a worshipper: By reciting during prayer, “All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists),” it becomes firmly ingrained in one's mind that Allah ﷻ is perfect in every sense, that one must praise Allah ﷻ for having guided him to His obedience and for the blessings He ﷻ has bestowed upon

him, and that he should praise Allah ﷻ by mentioned His beautiful names and attributes. Then, when one recites, "You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)," one applies one's belief in pure Islamic Monotheism by asking for help from Allah ﷻ alone. And when one says during prayer, "Guide us to the Straight Way," one acknowledges one's dire need not only for guidance but for steadfastness upon guidance, so that he can reap the fruits that the righteous are deserving of, and avoid the punishment of those who have earned Allah's anger or who have gone astray.

Upon bowing down and physically humbling oneself, one magnifies Allah ﷻ and then glorifies Him ﷻ, showing submission both with one's heart and with one's body. Then, when one performs prostration, one places the best and most honoured part of his body on the ground, manifesting his complete submission to his Lord ﷻ. While one's body is performing prostrating in a position of humility, his heart should, in a sense, perform prostration as well – feeling a sense of one's own lowness and the greatness of Allah ﷻ. Despite the disparity between one being so low during prostration and Allah ﷻ being Most High, one never comes nearer to his Lord ﷻ as one does while he is performing prostration. During prostration, the more one feels humility and fear of Allah ﷻ, the closer one gets to his Lord, which is alluded to in the following Verse:

﴿كَلَّا لَا تُطَعُّهُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ﴾

"Nay! (O Muhammad ﷺ! Do not obey him (Abu Jahl). Fall prostrate and draw near to Allah!" (Qur'an 96: 19)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, "A slave never gets so close to his Lord ﷻ as he does when he is performing prostration, so supplicate much (while you are performing prostration)."^[1]

Then, finally, when one is in the seated position during prayer,

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Prayer"; chapter, "What is Said During The Bowing and Prostrating, Positions (During Prayer)." *Hadeeth* number: 482.

one asks for forgiveness for his sins, hoping all the while for Allah's Mercy.

Thus in each action of prayer, one manifests one's servitude and submission to Allah ﷻ; at the same time, one strengthens one's faith, which is what purification of the soul is founded upon, and which is one of the greatest of fruits that one reaps from prayer.

- 2) Through prayer, the Companions ؓ had a way of privately communicating with their Lord ﷻ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ said, 'I have divided the prayer in half between Me and My slaves, and My slave will have what he asks for.' So when the slave (of Allah) says, 'All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists),' Allah ﷻ says, 'My slave has praised Me.' And when he (the slave of Allah ﷻ) says, 'The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful,' Allah ﷻ says, 'My slave has extolled Me.' And when he says, 'The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e., the Day of Resurrection),' Allah ﷻ says, 'My slave has glorified Me.' And when he says, 'You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything); guide us to the Straight Way, the Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians),' Allah ﷻ says, 'This is for My slave, and My slave will have what he asks for.'"^[1]

The Companions ؓ learned that such private communication with Allah ﷻ was from the most important of ways to purify their souls and strengthen their faith.

- 3) The achievement of tranquility and peace of mind: Whenever some hardship or difficulty befell the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ would find solace through prayer; in fact, it is related that the delight

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Prayer"; chapter, "It is Compulsory to Recite the 'Opening Chapter Soorah Al-Faatihah' in Every Unit (of Prayer)." *Hadeeth* number: 395.

of his eye, or in other words his greatest pleasure, was prayer.^[1] The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ many voluntary acts of worship, so that they could increase their connection with their Lord ﷻ and subsequently enjoy inner peace. And so prayer is the best weapon one has at one's disposal to disburden oneself from anxiety and worries.

- 4) Prayer is like a barrier that prevents one from sinning. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ۖ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ۝٤٥﴾

"Recite (O Muhammad ﷺ, what has been revealed to you of the Book (the Qur'an), and perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat). Verily, As-Salaat (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahsha (i.e., great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) and Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc.) and the remembering (praising, etc.) of (you by) Allah (in front of the angels) is greater indeed [than your remembering (praising, etc.) of Allah in prayers, etc.]. And Allah knows what you do." (Qur'an 29: 45)

When they prayed, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ found extra strength that propelled them to do good deeds and to flee from evil deeds. The spiritual strength they gained from prayer helped them overcome desire and lust. Just as the Companions ﷺ felt that prayer helped them stay away from evil deeds, so too did they realize that prayer atones for sins and raises one's ranking with Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَرُفُلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّاكِرِينَ ۝١٤﴾

"And perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), at the ends of the

[1] Al-Haakim (2/160) related it and said, "It is authentic, and it fulfills the conditions of Muslim." Adh-Dhahabee concurred with his ruling."

day and in some hours of the night [i.e., the five compulsory Salaat (prayers)]. Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds (i.e., small sins). That is a reminder (an advice) for the mindful (those who accept advice)." (Qur'an 11: 114)

Praying of course has many other positive effects, in terms of purifying and disciplining the soul. The Prophet ﷺ said, "And prayer is light."^[1] Prayer illuminates for one the path of guidance; also, prayer is light in the heart for a person who tastes the sweetness of faith. And prayer is light on a person's face in this world, and more so in the Hereafter, when his face will truly shine, as opposed to one who abandons prayer. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُم بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ بُشْرَاكُمُ الْيَوْمَ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝﴾

"On the Day you shall see the believing men and the believing women – their light running forward before them and by their right hands. Glad tidings for you this Day! Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever! Truly, this is the great success!" (Qur'an 57: 12)

Prayer, as we mentioned, is one of the most important acts of worship when it comes to purifying the soul, but there are other acts of worship which, in the same regard, are also important – such as remembering Allah ﷻ, invoking Allah ﷻ, reciting the Qur'an, listening to Qur'anic recitation, and struggling against the evil thoughts and suggestions that occur frequently in one's heart and soul. By performing these acts of worship, the Companions found different means of communicating privately with their Lord ﷻ and of manifesting different kinds of servitude and submission to Allah ﷻ, both of which had the effect of raising their ranking with Allah ﷻ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ said, 'I am with the thoughts of My slave about Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in his

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Purification"; chapter, "The Virtues of Ablution." *Hadeeth* number: 223.

self, I remember him in My Self, If he remembers me in a gathering, I remember him in a gathering whose members are better than them (i.e., the members of My slave's gathering). If he approaches Me the distance of a hand span, I approach him the distance of a forearm. If he approaches Me the distance of a forearm, I approach him the distance of outstretched arms. And if he comes to Me walking, I come to him running."^[1]

Of the different forms of remembrance mentioned above, the recitation of the Qur'an is the noblest and best. Through the recitation of the Qur'an, the Companions ﷺ increased both their love of Allah ﷻ and the degree to which they feared Allah ﷻ in their hearts. The Qur'an cured the diseases that afflicted their souls:

﴿وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا﴾ (٨٢)

"And We send down from the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism and act on it), and it increases the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers) nothing but loss." (Qur'an 17: 82)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَقَالُوا لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ ۖ أَأَعْجَمِيٌّ وَعَرَبِيٌّ قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءٌ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُنَادَوْنَ مِن مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ﴾ (٨٢)

"And if We had sent this as a Qur'an in a foreign language other than Arabic, they would have said: 'Why are not its verses explained in detail (in our language)? What! (A Book) not in Arabic and (the Messenger) an Arab?'" Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing. And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness (deafness) in their ears, and it (the Qur'an) is

^[1] Saheeh Muslim, "The Book of Remembrance and Supplication"; chapter, "The Exhortation to Remember Allah ﷻ." Hadeeth number: 2675.

blindness for them. They are those who are called from a place far away (so they neither listen nor understand)." (Qur'an 41: 44)

And Allah ﷻ said in yet another Verse:

﴿الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ﴾
 ﴿٢٨﴾

"Those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah, verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest."
 (Qur'an 13: 28)

Supplication is also of supreme importance in the life of a Muslim, and it is one of the clearest manifestations of worship. As the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Ad-Du'ah (supplication) is worship."^[1] In a single Verse of the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ at once ordered His slaves to invoke Him and warned those who deem themselves above worshipping Him of a severe torment:

﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ﴾
 ﴿٦٠﴾

"And your Lord said: "Invoke Me, [i.e., believe in My Oneness (Islamic Monotheism)] (and ask Me for anything) I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship [i.e., do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness, (Islamic Monotheism)] they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!"
 (Qur'an 40: 60)

Commenting on this Verse, Ibn Katheer, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "Worship in 'those who scorn My worship,' means, those who do not supplicate to me and do not believe in My Oneness (Islamic Monotheism)."^[2]

The Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ that, just as the body

^[1] Abu Daawood (1479).

^[2] Tafseer Ibn Katheer (4/86).

needs nourishment for its upkeep, so does the heart need constant nourishment, of the variety of supplication, remembrance of Allah ﷻ, and recitation of the Qur'an. These forms of nourishment protect the heart from all kinds of diseases that can afflict it. In order to provide them with constant protection from diseases, the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ what invocations to say at different times and during different situations – invocations for the morning and evening; for entering one's home or for leaving it; for entering the marketplace; for eating, drinking, or wearing clothing, and so on in terms of daily activities. And even if one is afflicted with a temporary inner illness – such as depression, stress, or anxiety – the invocations that the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ provide the cure, so that one's heart becomes alive again and returns to a state of peace and tranquility. One example is the invocation that the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ to say if they ever became afflicted with hardship or distress: "None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, the Forbearing. None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, Lord of the magnificent throne. None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, Lord of the heavens, Lord of the earth, and Lord of the noble throne."^[1]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ how to seek refuge in Allah ﷻ during times of hardship and distress, so that they could find the safety and inner peace one finds when one truly believes that Allah ﷻ will help one and answer one's supplications. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ
أَئِنَّهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَا تَذْكُرُونَ﴾ (١٦)

"Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations. Is there

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, "The Book of Supplications"; chapter, "Supplicating in Times of Distress." *Hadeeth* number: 6345.

any ilah (god) with Allah? Little is that you remember!" (Qur'an 27: 62)

Standing up late at night to pray, remembering Allah ﷻ, reciting the Qur'an, invoking Allah ﷻ for help – each of these contributes greatly to the process of purifying the soul. And were it not for a limitation of space, I could have included much more here about this topic; but even if I had added more, I still would not be able to do it justice. And success lies with Allah ﷻ.

Cultivation Of The Mind

Man is made up of a soul, a body, and a mind; and as such, the Qur'an addresses man as a whole, as a complete entity. And because the Prophet's teachings are derived from the Qur'an and are in harmony with the Qur'an, he ﷺ trained his Companions ﷺ in a comprehensive manner, dealing with each aspect of man's being. In terms of cultivating the mind, the Prophet ﷺ trained his Companions ﷺ to develop their abilities to think, contemplate, and infer. Over and over again in the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ commands us to contemplate the universe around us and to learn how to think in a proper and intelligent manner. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ أَنْظَرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُعْنِي الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ (١١)

"Say: "Behold all that is in the heavens and the earth," but neither Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) nor warners benefit those who believe not."
(Qur'an 10: 101)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ (٢٠)

"Say: "Travel in the land and see how (Allah) originated creation, and then Allah will bring forth (resurrect) the creation

of the Hereafter (i.e., resurrection after death). Verily, Allah is Able to do all things.” (Qur’an 29: 20)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ كَتَبْنَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا ءَايَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ۝٢٩ ﴾

“(This is) a Book (the Qur’an) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.” (Qur’an 38: 29)

And Allah ﷻ said in yet another Chapter of the Qur’an:

﴿ فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ ۝٢٤ أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا ۝٢٥ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا ۝٢٦ فَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا ۝٢٧ وَعَيْنًا وَقَضًا ۝٢٨ وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ۝٢٩ وَحَدَائِقَ غُلَبًا ۝٣٠ وَفَكَهْنًا وَأَبًّا ۝٣١ مُنْعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِاتْمِعَكُمْ ۝٣٢ ﴾

“Then let man look at his food, that We pour forth water in abundance, and We split the earth in clefts, and We cause therein the grain to grow, and grapes and clover plants (i.e., green fodder for the cattle), and olive and date-palms, and gardens, dense with many trees, and fruits and Abba (herbage, etc.), (to be) a provision and benefit for you and your cattle.” (Qur’an 80: 24-32)

The mind is central to man’s religious duties in that it distinguishes between those who are responsible for their actions – sane people – and those who are not Islamically responsible for their actions – insane people. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا ۝٣٦ ﴾

“And follow not (O man, i.e., say not, or do not or witness not, etc.) that of which you have no knowledge (e.g., one’s saying : “I have seen,” while in fact he has not seen, or “I have heard,” while he has not heard). Verily! The hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those you will be questioned (by Allah).” (Qur’an 17: 36)

The mind is a great blessing from Allah ﷻ; with it, one is able to absorb, assimilate, and understand knowledge. And because of the mind's importance, Allah ﷻ has clarified the correct methodology for cultivating it, a methodology that the Prophet ﷺ of course relied upon to train his Companions رضي الله عنهم. The most important aspects of that methodology are as follows:

- 1) The mind must be divested of false preconceived notions, notions that are based upon guesswork, blind following, or custom. This principle is established in many different Verses of the Qur'an, such as in the following Verse:

﴿وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا﴾ (٢٨)

"While they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a guess, and verily, guess is no substitute for the truth." (Qur'an 53: 28)

- 2) The mind must search out for proofs and confirm or verify what comes to its attention. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِمِجَالَةٍ فَتُصِحُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ﴾ (٦)

"O you who believe! If a rebellious evil person comes to you with a news, verify it, lest you harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done." (Qur'an 49: 6)

- 3) The mind should contemplate universal laws and patterns that Allah ﷻ has established for the universe:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَآتِيَةٌ فَاصْفَحِ الْصَفْحَ الْحَبِيلَ﴾ (٨٥)

"And We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them except with truth, and the Hour is surely coming, so overlook (O Muhammad ﷺ), their faults with gracious

forgiveness. (This was before the ordainment of Jihaad – holy fighting in Allah's Cause).'' (Qur'an 15: 85)

- 4) The mind should reflect on the wisdom behind the legislation of Islamic laws and manners, and of the *Shariah* as a whole; such a reflective process develops and strengthens the mind. Allah ﷻ decreed laws to test human beings, but also to bring them peace, tranquility, and happiness – at least to those among them who submit to and apply Allah's *Shariah*. To fully appreciate the *Shariah* when applying it, man does well to contemplate the wisdom behind a given legislation, and if he is not able to understand the wisdom behind a particular legislation, he should appreciate the fact that there is a profound wisdom, though his limited mind cannot perceive it. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَاءِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ﴾ (١١٩)

“And why should you not eat of that (meat) on which Allah's Name has been pronounced (at the time of slaughtering the animal), while He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity? And surely many do lead (mankind) astray by their own desires through lack of knowledge. Certainly your Lord knows best the transgressors.” (Qur'an 6: 119)

- 5) The mind should reflect on the way in which Allah ﷻ dealt with mankind throughout history, to learn lessons from previous generations, since Allah ﷻ deals with nations and peoples according to consistent laws and principles. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ مَكَّنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ تُمَكِّنْ لَكُمْ وَارْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ﴾ (٦)

"Have they not seen how many a generation before them We have destroyed whom We had established on the earth such as We have not established you? And We poured out on them rain from the sky in abundance, and made the rivers flow under them. Yet We destroyed them for their sins, and created after them other generations." (Qur'an 6: 6)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا وَجَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝١٣ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ خَلَائِفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لِنَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝١٤﴾

"And indeed, We destroyed generations before you, when they did wrong while their Messengers came to them with clear proofs, but they were not such as to believe! Thus do We requite the people who are Mujrimoon (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, criminals, etc.). Then We made you follow after them, generations, after generations in the land, that We might see how you would work!" (Qur'an 10: 13, 14)

And Allah ﷻ said in yet another Verse:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارُوا الْأَرْضَ وَعَمَرُوهَا أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا وَجَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا كَانُوا لِيُظْلَمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ۝٩﴾

"Do they not travel in the land, and see what was the end of those before them? They were superior to them in strength, and they tilled the earth and populated it in greater numbers than these (pagans) have done, and there came to them their Messengers with clear proofs. Surely, Allah wronged them not, but they used to wrong themselves." (Qur'an 9: 9)

These and similar Verses taught the Companions ﷺ to use their

minds in ways that please Allah ﷻ, as opposed to philosophers and others of their ilk who went astray, glorifying the mind and ascribing to it qualities and abilities that it does not possess.

Cultivation Of The Body

The Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ about how to maintain their bodies, basing the principles of what he ﷺ taught on the Noble Qur'an; his main goal in this regard was to teach each of them how to use his body for the purpose for which it was created, without being extravagant or negligent in its upkeep.

In the Noble Qur'an, Allah ﷻ clarified those foods that are good and lawful, as well as those foods that are prohibited; and at the same time He ﷻ reproached those who make forbidden for themselves that which is good and lawful. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ كَذَلِكَ نَفْصِلُ الْأَبْتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْمُونَ﴾
(٣٢)

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): 'Who has forbidden the adoration with clothes given by Allah, which He has produced for his slaves, and At-Tayibaat [all kinds of Halaal (lawful) things] of food?' Say: 'They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) exclusively for them (believers) on the Day of Resurrection (the disbelievers will not share them).'" Thus We explain the Ayaat (Islamic laws) in detail for people who have knowledge." (Qur'an 7: 32)

To be sure, when one satisfies his physical needs, one is more able to then fulfill the duties that Allah ﷻ has charged him with. For this reason, Allah ﷻ mentioned in the Noble Qur'an the needs of a human body, which are as follows:

1) The need for food and drink; Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَبْنَىٰ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ﴾
(٣١)

“O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes), while praying and going round (the Tawaf of) the Ka’bah, and eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allah) likes not Al-Musrifoon (those who waste by extravagance).” (Qur’an 7: 31)

- 2) The need for clothing, for both males and females must cover their respective private parts; different kinds of clothing are also needed for protection from extremely cold or extremely hot weather. Also, Allah ﷻ mentioned that one should wear nice, clean attire when one goes to the Masjid:

﴿يٰۤاَيُّهَا اٰدَمُ خُذْ زِينَتَكَ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ۝۳۱﴾

“O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes), while praying and going round (the Tawaf of) the Ka’bah, and eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allah) likes not Al-Musrifoon (those who waste by extravagance).” (Qur’an 7: 31)

- 3) The need for shelter; Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَاللّٰهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ بُيُوْتِكُمْ سَكَنًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ جُلُوْدِ الْاَنْعَامِ بُيُوْتًا تَسْتَخِفُوْنَهَا يَوْمَ ظَعْنِكُمْ وَيَوْمَ اِقَامَتِكُمْ وَمِنْ اَصْوَابِهَا وَاَوْبَارِهَا وَاَشْعَارُهَا اَتْنٰا وَمَتْنٰا اِلٰى حِيْنٍ ۝۸۰﴾

“And Allah has made for you in your homes an abode, and made for you out of the hides of the cattle (tents for) dwelling, which you find so light (and handy) when you travel and when you stay (in your travels), and of their wool, fur, and hair (sheep wool, camel fur, and goat hair), a furnishing and articles of convenience (e.g., carpets, blankets, etc.), a comfort for a while.” (Qur’an 16: 80)

- 4) Sexual needs and the need to have a family, both of which are made possible through the legislation of marriage, which at

times is permissible, and which at other times is obligatory. Allah ﷻ also made it clear that, while marriage is permissible, any form of sexual activity outside of marriage is forbidden:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأُزْوَاجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ۖ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ۚ فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ۖ﴾ (٧)

“And those who guard their chastity (i.e., private parts, from illegal sexual acts), except from their wives or (the captives and slaves) that their right hand possess, – for then, they are free from blame; but whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors.” (Qur’an 23: 5-7)

- 5) The need to own possessions and to be in control of one’s financial situation; it is permissible in Islam, within set boundaries, to own wealth and property. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ءَامِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُسْتَخْلَفِينَ فِيهِ فَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْفَقُوا هُمْ أَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ۖ﴾ (٧)

“And spend of that whereof He has made your trustees. And such of you as believe and spend (in Allah’s Way), – theirs will be a great reward.” (Qur’an 57: 7)

- 6) The need for personal safety, which is fulfilled in Islam through the prohibition of transgression and oppression. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ ۖ﴾ (٦)

“And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah or rejects His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, revelations, etc.)? Verily, the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) shall never be successful.” (Qur’an 6: 21)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ لَّمَّا كَذَبُوا الرُّسُلَ أَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سُلَالًا مِّنَ الْمَاءِ وَاعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۝٣٧﴾

“And Nooh’s (Noah’s) people, when they denied the Messengers We drowned them, and We made them as a sign for mankind. And We have prepared a painful torment for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.).” (Qur’an 25: 37)

And Allah ﷻ said in yet another Verse:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ۝٩٠﴾

“Verily, Allah enjoins Al-‘Adl (i.e., justice and worshipping none but Allah Alone – Islamic Monotheism) and Al-Ihsan [i.e., to be patient in performing your duties to Allah, totally for Allah’s sake and in accordance with the Sunnah (legal ways) of the Prophet ﷺ in a perfect manner], and giving (help) to kith and kin (i.e., all that Allah has ordered you to give them, e.g., wealth, visiting, looking after them, or any other kind of help, etc.): and forbids Al-Fahsha (i.e., all evil deeds, e.g., illegal sexual acts, disobedience of parents, polytheism, to tell lies, to give false witness, to kill a life without right, etc.) and Al-Munkar (i.e., all that is prohibited by Islamic law: polytheism of every kind, disbelief and every kind of evil deeds, etc.), and Al-Baghy (i.e., all kinds of oppression), He admonishes you, that you may take heed.” (Qur’an 16: 90)

- 7) The need to work and achieve some sort of worldly success: Muslims are called upon to work in this world, in order to live up to their worldly and religious duties. Whatever one does to earn his living, it must be lawful work, and it must not involve harming other people. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالُوا أَوْزَيْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا قَالَ عَنِ رَبِّكُمْ أَن يُهْلِكَ عَذَابُكُمْ وَسَخْلَفَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝١١٩﴾

"They said : 'We (Children of Israel) had suffered troubles before you came to us, and since you have come to us.' He said : 'It may be that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you successors on the earth, so that He may see how you act?'" (Qur'an 7: 129)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ إِنَّ

﴿٣٠﴾

"Verily! As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, – certainly! We shall not suffer to be lost the reward of anyone who does his (righteous) deeds in the most perfect manner." (Qur'an 18: 30)

As it is made clear in the following Verse, the Muslim is called upon to do deeds in a good manner:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَنِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ

الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾﴾

"Verily, Allah enjoins Al-'Adl (i.e., justice and worshipping none but Allah Alone – Islamic Monotheism) and Al-Ihsan [i.e., to be patient in performing your duties to Allah, totally for Allah's sake and in accordance with the Sunnah (legal ways) of the Prophet ﷺ in a perfect manner], and giving (help) to kith and kin (i.e., all that Allah has ordered you to give them, e.g., wealth, visiting, looking after them, or any other kind of help, etc.): and forbids Al-Fahsha (i.e., all evil deeds, e.g., illegal sexual acts, disobedience of parents, polytheism, to tell lies, to give false witness, to kill a life without right, etc.) and Al-Munkar (i.e., all that is prohibited by Islamic law : polytheism of every kind, disbelief and every kind of evil deeds, etc.), and Al-Baghy (i.e., all kinds of oppression), He admonishes you, that you may take heed." (Qur'an 16: 90)

And in the following Verse, Allah ﷻ gave a stern warning about

being ungrateful for the blessings He ﷺ bestowed upon mankind:

﴿وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ بَطَرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا فَإِنَّكَ مَسْكُونُهُمْ لَمْ تُشْكِرْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ الْوَارِثِينَ﴾ (٥٨)

“And how many a town (population) have We destroyed, which were thankless for its means of livelihood (disobeyed Allah, and His Messengers, by doing evil deeds and crimes)! And those are their dwellings, which have not been inhabited after them except a little. And verily! We have been the inheritors.” (Qur’an 28: 58)

The Prophet ﷺ trained his Companions ﷺ based upon the methodology of the Noble Qur’an, a methodology that involves purification of the soul, enlightenment of the mind, and the preservation and strengthening of the body. Each facet of this methodology must be applied if the individual is to develop a balanced, Islamic personality. The Prophet ﷺ applied this methodology on his Companions ﷺ and achieved wonderful results, results that we can hope to repeat only if we apply the same methodology to ourselves and to those we teach.

Cultivating The Manners Of The Companions ﷺ

Good manners are inextricably linked with sound beliefs; if one has the latter, he should possess the former as well. Makkan Chapters of the Qur’an abound with Verses that encourage Muslims to develop good and lofty manners; some such Verses remind Muslims that, in terms of good manners and a noble character, they have an ideal example in the Prophet ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾ (٤)

“And verily, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) are on an exalted standard of character.” (Qur’an 68: 4)

And when ‘Aishah ﷺ was asked about the character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, she ﷺ said, “Verily, the character of the

Prophet of Allah ﷺ was the Qur'an."^[1] The following Verse encapsulates the manners that Allah ﷻ ordered the Prophet ﷺ to adopt:

﴿ خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴾ (١٩٩)

"Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e., don't punish them)." (Qur'an 7: 199)

"Show forgiveness," as Mujaahid pointed out, encompasses many manners, such as to accept apologies from others, to forgive, to be easygoing in one's dealings, to not delve into the motives of others, and so on. Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ clarified that, "Enjoin what is good," encompasses everything that is good, *Tawheed* being the highest good, followed by the rights of worship (of Allah ﷻ), and then the rights of Allah's slaves. At the end of the previous Verse, Allah ﷻ said, "And turn away from the foolish," which means: If an ignorant person does wrong by you, do not reciprocate his wrongdoing with a similar act of ignorance. And a similar meaning is conveyed in the following Verse:

﴿وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا﴾ (٦٣)

"And the slaves of the Most Beneficent (Allah) are those who walk on the earth in humility and sedateness, and when the foolish address them (with bad words) they reply back with mild words of gentleness." (Qur'an 25: 63)

As 'Aishah ؓ made clear in the above-mentioned *Hadeeth*, if all of the manners taught in the Qur'an – such as those from the above-mentioned Verses – are put together, they, as a sum total, constitute the character of the Prophet ﷺ. And as is related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "Of all people, the Prophet ﷺ had the best manners."^[2]

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Prayer for Travelers." *Hadeeth* number: 746.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Manners." *Hadeeth* number: 6203.

The Prophet ﷺ encouraged his Companions ﷺ to adopt a lofty set of manners, reminding them of the great reward a person receives if he has good manners: "On the Day of Resurrection, nothing is heavier in the scale of the believer than a good character (good manners). And verily, Allah ﷻ detests the shameless, indecent one who has foul manners."^[1]

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about what most frequently makes people enter Paradise, he ﷺ said, "Fear of Allah and good manners." And when he was asked about what most frequently makes people enter the Hellfire, he ﷺ said, "The mouth and the private part (s)."^[2] In another *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ clarified the great reward for having a good character: "Indeed, from the most beloved of you to me, and from the closest of you to me on the Day of Resurrection, are those among you who have the best manners. And indeed, the most loathsome of you to me, and the furthest of you from me on the Day of Resurrection are the *Ath-Tharthaaroon* (those who speak a lot about things that have no religious value or benefit), *Al-Mutashaddiqoon* (the singular of *Al-Mutashaddiqoon*, *Al-Mutashaddiq*, refers to one who feigns eloquence and gives himself airs when he speaks, so as to show his superiority over others), and *Al-Mutafaihiqoon*." The Companions ﷺ said, "O Messenger of Allah, we indeed know the meanings of *At-Tharthaaroon* and *Al-Mutashaddiqoon*, but what does *Al-Mutafaihiqoon* refer to?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "The arrogant ones."^[3]

In Islam, manners and a good character are not of secondary importance; to the contrary, manners are fundamental to Islam and to the life of a Muslim. In fact, from the very early days of his Prophethood, the Prophet ﷺ stressed the importance of good

^[1] *At-Tirmidhee*, "The Book of Piety and of Joining Ties (with Relatives)"; chapter, "What is Related Regarding Good Manners." *Hadeeth* number: 2002.

^[2] *At-Tirmidhee*, "The Book of Piety and of Joining Ties (with Relatives)"; chapter, "What is Related Regarding Good Manners." *Hadeeth* number: 2004.

^[3] *At-Tirmidhee*, "The Book of Piety and of Joining Ties (with Relatives)"; chapter, "What is Related Regarding the Highest of Manners." *Hadeeth* number: 2018.

manners, even while he ﷺ was busy teaching his Companions about the importance of correct beliefs. Furthermore, the manifestations of good manners are not limited to particular aspects of life, but rather are spread over to every aspect, every facet, and every part of a person's life. One can even say that good manners represent an outward translation of *Eemaan* (faith), for *Eemaan* is not merely a group of feelings that remain deep within a person's soul; rather, it is also actions and manners that manifest themselves outwardly. Therefore, when one does not see in himself outward manifestations of Islamic deeds and manners, or when one sees the opposite, one certainly needs to ask the question: Where is the *Eemaan* I claim to have? And if I do have *Eemaan*, what benefit is it to me if it is not outwardly translated through good manners and deeds? It is for the reasons outlined above that one finds that the Noble Qur'an established a clear and strong link between manners and beliefs; for example, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝ ١ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ۝ ٢ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ۝ ٣ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ۝ ٤ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوحِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ۝ ٥ إِلَّا عَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ۝ ٦ فَمَنْ أَتْبَعِيَ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ۝ ٧ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ۝ ٨ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ۝ ٩ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ۝ ١٠ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۝ ١١﴾

“Successful indeed are the believers. Those who offer their Salaat (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness. And those who turn away from Al-Laghw (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood, and all that Allah has forbidden). And those who pay the Zakaat. And those who guard their chastity (i.e., private parts, from illegal sexual acts). Except from their wives or (the captives and slaves) that their right hands possess, – for then, they are free from blame. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors; those who are faithfully true to their

Amanat (all the duties which Allah has ordained, honesty, moral responsibility and trusts, etc.) and to their covenants; and those who strictly guard their (five compulsory congregational) Salawaat (prayers) (at their fixed stated hours). These are indeed the inheritors. Who shall inherit the Firdaus (Paradise). They shall dwell therein forever.” (Qur’an 23: 1-11)

This Chapter, *Soorah Al-Mo’minoos*, begins by establishing and stressing the fact that “Successful indeed are the believers.” Then, in a detailed manner, the Chapter describes, and in essence defines, “the believers”. In that description, manners and characteristics are stressed, to show, on the one hand, that good manners and traits are the fruits of *Eemaan*, and, on the other hand, that *Eemaan* consists of tangible actions and deeds. The Chapter begins by mentioning one of the most important characteristics of believers: that they offer their prayers with “all solemnity and full submissiveness,” which means that, while they pray, they remember Allah ﷻ in their hearts, they are in deep concentration, and they are submissive and fearful of Allah ﷻ. The next Verse mentions another characteristic of believers: that they “turn away from *Al-Laghaw* (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood, and all that Allah has forbidden).” Correct *Eemaan* leads to a sense of purpose and determination in life, which does not mean that a believer is frowning all the time, but it does mean that he avoids false and vain speech. For false and vain talk are not compatible with the weighty message that a believer is responsible for before his Creator ﷻ. The next characteristic refers to how believers realize that Allah ﷻ has a right over their wealth, and that right is established through the payment of *Zakaat*. The Chapter goes on to mention other characteristics: That believers engage in lawful sexual activity only and that they fulfill the trusts that they are charged with.

In the above-mentioned Verses from *Soorah Al-Mo’minoos*, Allah ﷻ provides a detail picture of a believer’s personality. It is interesting to note that the list of characteristics in those Verses begins with worship – by describing those who pray with full

solemnity and submissiveness – and ends with worship – by describing those who strictly adhere to the five compulsory congregational prayers.

According to what is suitable to a specific context, the Qur'an shifts its focus between worship and manners. For example, in *Soorah Adh-Dhaariyaat*, when the *Muttaqoon* (those who fear Allah ﷻ; the pious ones) are being described, worship is stressed:

﴿أَجْزِينَ مَا ءَاتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

“Taking joy in the things which their Lord has given them. Verily, they were before this Muhsinoon (good-doers). They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allah) and praying, with fear and hope]. And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allah) for forgiveness, and in their properties there was the right of the beggar, and the Mahroom (the poor who does not ask the others).” (Qur'an 51: 16-19)

But in *Soorah Ar-Ra'ad*, when those of sound, intelligent minds are being described, manners are stressed:

﴿أَفَمَن يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَىٰ إِنَّمَا يَنْذَرُ أَكْثَرُ الْأَكْبَابِ ﴿١٩﴾ الَّذِينَ يُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَنْقُضُونَ الْعَيْثَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢١﴾ وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَدْرَعُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ أُولَٰئِكَ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ عَقِبَى الدَّارِ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

“Shall he then who knows that what has been revealed unto you (O Muhammad ﷺ) from your Lord is the truth be like him who is blind? But it is only the men of understanding that pay heed. Those who fulfill the Covenant of Allah and break not the Mithaaq (bond, treaty, covenant); those who join that which Allah has commanded to be joined (i.e., they are good to their relatives and do not sever the bond of kinship), fear their Lord, and dread the

terrible reckoning (i.e., abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which Allah has forbidden and perform all kinds of good deeds which Allah has ordained). And those who remain patient, seeking their Lord's Countenance, perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), and spend out of that which We have bestowed on them, secretly and openly, and defend evil with good, for such there is a good end." (Qur'an 13: 19-22)

It is more than worthy to note here that, despite the fact that most of the description being given in these Verses has to do with characteristics and manners – such as patience, trustworthiness, loyalty, and spending for good causes – the Verses are not describing merely civilized manners, but rather divinely revealed manners, which one assumes as an act of worship. Believers fulfill the Covenant of Allah ﷻ or they join ties of family relations only because they “fear their Lord and dread the terrible reckoning.” And they are patient only because they are “seeking their Lord's Countenance.” If the believers assume or adopt any characteristic, they do so only because they hope from Allah ﷻ and hope for a good ending in the Hereafter.

Being truthful in speech, fulfilling the trust, living up to promises, being patient during times of hardship, helping those in distress, showing mercy to the young and respect for the elderly – the Companions ﷺ did all of the above and more for the sake of Allah ﷻ and out of a desire for His reward. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَوَقَّاهُمُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا ۝۱۱ وَجَزَّاهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا ۝۱۲﴾

“So Allah saved them from the evil of that Day, and gave them Nadratan (a light of beauty) and joy. And their recompense shall be Paradise, and silken garments, because they were patient.” (Qur'an 76: 11, 12)

Throughout their spiritual training, the Companions ﷺ learned that worship is a category of manners, because through worship, one fulfills the Covenant of Allah ﷻ, shows thankfulness for blessings,

acknowledges kindness shown, and shows veneration – or in this case glorifies and worships He Who is worthy of glorification.

A believer worships Allah ﷻ through the manners and characteristics he adopts. And the criterion upon which he decides between good and bad manners is neither arbitrary nor defined by human beings, but rather is what Allah ﷻ commands and forbids. One's conscious or innate nature is not enough to distinguish between good and bad manners, simply because neither the conscious nor one's innate nature is infallible. Many people throughout this world both in the past and the present have claimed to have clean consciences, confident that they have done no great wrong; yet most of them have done great wrong by associating partners with Allah ﷻ in worship and by perpetrating other vile deeds! So to be sure, though the conscience plays an important role in life, it is not a sufficient, precise, or reliable guide to what is right.

The mind is not much better equipped than the conscience is to decide between what is right and what is wrong, since the mind is limited by environment, by circumstances, by idiosyncratic ways of thinking, which is why moralistic philosophers have such divergent views when they define good characteristics and manners. Custom is just as worse off in this regard as are the conscience and the mind; customs are never universal and are never stable: Customs change from one generation to the next, and even in the same generation, they differ from country to country, and even from region to region. For all of these reasons, the believer, in discerning between good and bad manners, relies on the one and only infallible source – revelation.

In Islam, manners are not limited, as opposed to how they are in the Western sense – to the way one conducts oneself at the dinner table or when engaging in a conversation. In fact, the manners taught by the Prophet ﷺ are comprehensive of all of man's actions, feelings, and thoughts. The prayer, for example, has manners that must be adhered to; it is bad manners in prayer to wander in one's thoughts; and it is good manners in prayer to be in a state of complete concentration, with a presence of both heart

and mind. Simple conversation has manners that are Islamically required; for example, one must turn away from false, meaningless talk. One of the manners of living within a community is to seek mutual consultation in affairs that have an impact on the entire community. In Islam, manners are even relevant to emotions; for example, one of the manners of feeling angry is to forgive. As such, there are Islamic manners that dictate how a Muslim should act in all aspects of his life.

The following Verses represent a general covenant of manners, which the Companions رضي الله عنهم, as well as those who followed in their footsteps after them, adhered to:

﴿قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَنزِلْ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا
وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ أَمَلِيٍّ نَحْنُ نَرِزُقُكُمْ
وَوَيْسَاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنٌ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا
النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَُمْ وَصْنَكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾ وَلَا
تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَيْلِ وَالْمِيزَانَ
بِالْقِسْطِ لَا تَكْلَفْ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وَسْعَهَا وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ
وَمِمَّا هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ أَوْفُوا ذَلِكَُمْ وَصْنَكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾ وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي
مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصْنَكُمْ
بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited you from: Join not anything in worship with Him; be good and dutiful to your parents; kill not your children because of poverty – We provide sustenance for you and for them; come not near to Al-Fawahish (shameful sins, illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) whether committed openly or secretly, and kill not anyone whom Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islamic law). This He has commanded you that you may understand. And come not near to the orphan’s property, except to improve it, until he (or she) attains the age of full

strength; and give full measure and full weight with justice. We burden not any person, but that which he can bear. And whenever you give your word (i.e., judge between men or give evidence, etc.), say the truth even if a near relative is concerned, and fulfill the Covenant of Allah. This He commands you, that you may remember. And verily, this (i.e., Allah's commandments mentioned in the above two Verses 151 and 152) is my Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path. This He has ordained for you that you may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious)." (Qur'an 6: 151-153)

When one reflects upon these Verses, one finds that they deal, either overtly or by suggestion, with the five major needs of human beings, which Ash-Shaatibee defined as follows: "That which is necessary for one's religious and worldly well-being, so that, if one of these five needs is lacking, one's worldly well-being is not only compromised, but also is then replaced by corruption, commotion, and loss of life in this world, and loss of salvation and bliss in the Hereafter – what results, then (from the loss of one of the five major needs of human beings), is unmitigated loss." Islamic law has many important goals in mind, one of the most important of which is to preserve the five major needs of human beings, needs that are, as I mentioned above, discussed or alluded to in the aforementioned Verses from Soorah Al-An'aam. Those five major needs are:

- 1) Preservation of religion, which is discussed twice in the above-mentioned Verses, first in Allah's saying:

﴿أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا﴾

"Join not anything in worship with Him."

And then in His saying:

﴿وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ﴾

"This He commands you, that you may remember. And verily, this (i.e., Allah's commandments mentioned in the above two Verses 151 and 152) is my Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path."

The Prophet ﷺ strove to preserve the one true religion by applying its teachings, by struggling for its cause, by inviting others to embrace it, and by rejecting all that opposes it.

- 2) Preservation of life, which is also discussed twice in the above-mentioned Verses, first in Allah's saying, "Kill not your children because of poverty," and then in His saying, "And kill not anyone whom Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islamic law)." Islam has established certain safeguards to protect human beings. First, it has prohibited any unwarranted attack on human life. Second, it has, through the legislation of severe penalties, highly discouraged any attempts made against human life: the family of the murdered can demand the death penalty from the killer. Also, in extreme cases when death is imminent, Islam allows the consumption of otherwise unlawful sustenance, so as to preserve life. These are just a few of the many safeguards that Islam has legislated to preserve the sanctity of life.
- 3) Preservation of posterity and the family; Allah ﷻ said, "Come not near to *Al-Fawahish* (shameful sins, illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) whether committed openly or secretly." *Al-Faawahish* is the plural of *Fahishah* (which is defined above in parentheses); the use of the plural points to the fact that there are different kinds of shameful sins. The worst kind of *Fahishah* is fornication; in another verse, Allah ﷻ explicitly mentioned that fornication, or "unlawful sexual intercourse," is a form of *Fahishah*:

﴿وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزِّنَىٰ إِنَّكُمْ كَانُمْ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا﴾ (٣١)

"And come not near to the unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily, it

is a Fahishah [i.e., anything that transgresses its limits (a great sin)], and an evil way (that leads one to Hell unless Allah forgives him)." (Qur'an 17: 32)

Preservation of family and posterity is of crucial importance to the welfare of human beings. If proper family structure and the safety of children are preserved in a given nation, that nation will certainly thrive and prosper.

- 4) Preservation of wealth, which is discussed in Allah's saying, "And come not near to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he (or she) attains the age of full strength," and in His saying, "And give full measure and full weight with justice." Islam has placed many safeguards to protect a person's wealth, both from others – for example, by forbidding any form of transgression against a person's wealth – and from one's own self – for example, by forbidding extravagant spending and transactions, such as usury, which take away from the blessings of one's wealth. Cutting off of the thief's hand, strict procedures for the writing of contracts, the permissibility of physically defending one's property and wealth, severe punishment for highway robbers and others like them who compromise the safety of citizens – these are just some examples of how Islam safeguards people's wealth.
- 5) Preservation of the mind: One is required to live up to his religious duties only if one is of sound mind. The importance of the mind and the role the mind has to play in recognizing its duties and then turning to piety are, and Allah ﷻ knows best, alluded to in Allah's saying: "This He has ordained for you that you may become *Al-Muttaqoon* (the pious)." Also, Islam prohibits everything that pollutes the mind or negatively affects its inner workings.

Throughout the Noble Qur'an, human beings are called upon to adopt noble manners. For example, Allah ﷻ said in *Soorah Al-Israa*:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ إِنَّمَا يُبَلِّغُنَّ عَنْكَ
الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَمْرًا وَلَا نَهْرَهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا
كَرِيمًا ۝٣٣﴾ وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذَّلِيلِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي
صَغِيرًا ۝٣٤ رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي نُفُوسِكُمْ ۚ إِن تَكُونُوا صَالِحِينَ فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ لِلْأَوَّابِ
غَفُورًا ۝٣٥﴾ وَأَمَّا ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ فَحَقُّهُ وَالْيَسِيرِ وَالْبَنِ السَّيْلِ وَلَا تُبْذِرْ تَبَذُّرًا ۚ إِنَّ
الْعَبْدِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ ۚ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا ۝٣٧﴾ وَإِنَّمَا تُرْضَىٰ عَنْهُمْ
أَتْيَاةَ رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْ رَبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُلْ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّيْسُورًا ۝٣٨﴾ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ
عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَّحْسُورًا ۝٣٩﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن
يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا بَصِيرًا ۝٣٠﴾ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةً إِمَّا يَكُنْ
زُرْقُهُمْ وَإِنَّا كَرِهْنَا لَكُمْ أَنْ تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ كَانُمْ فِتْنَةً
وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ۝٣١﴾ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ وَمَن قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ
جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيهِ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يَسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنصُورًا ۝٣٢﴾ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ
الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ ۚ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَاتِبٌ مَّشْهُوَلًا
۝٣٤﴾ وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا كَلَّمْتُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ إِنَّ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ۝٣٥﴾ وَلَا
تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْهُوَلًا
۝٣٦﴾ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۚ إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا ۝٣٧﴾ كُلُّ
ذَٰلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا ۝٣٨﴾ ﴿

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour. And lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and say: “My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was small.” Your Lord knows best what is in your inner-selves. If you are righteous, then, verily, He is Ever Most Forgiving to those who

turn unto Him again and again in obedience, and in repentance. And give to the kindred his due and to the Miskin (poor) and to the wayfarer. But spend not wastefully (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift. Verily, spendthrifts are brothers of the Shayaatin (devils), and the Shaitaan (Satan) is ever ungrateful to his Lord. And if you (O Muhammad ﷺ) turn away from them (kindred, poor, wayfarer, etc. whom We have ordered you to give their rights, but if you have no money at the time they ask you for it) and you are awaiting a mercy from your Lord for which you hope, then, speak unto them a soft kind word (i.e., Allah will give me and I shall give you). And let not your hand be tied (like a miser) to your neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach (like a spendthrift), so that you become blameworthy and in severe poverty. Truly, your Lord enlarges the provision for whom He wills and straitens (for whom He wills). Verily, He is Ever All-Knower, All-Seer of His slaves. And kill not your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Surely, the killing of them is a great sin. And come not near to the unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily, it is a Fahishah [i.e., anything that transgresses its limits (a great sin)], and an evil way (that leads one to Hell unless Allah forgives him). And do not kill anyone which Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause. And whoever is killed (intentionally with hostility and oppression and not by mistake), We have given his heir the authority [(to demand Qisas, – Law of Equality in punishment – or to forgive, or to take Diay (blood-money))]. But let him not exceed limits in the matter of taking life (i.e., he should not kill except the killer only). Verily, he is helped (by the Islamic law). And come not near to the orphan's property except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength. And fulfill (every) covenant. Verily! the covenant, will be questioned about. And give full measure when you measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight. That is good (advantageous) and better in the end. And follow not (O man, i.e., say not, or do not or witness not, etc.) that of which you have no knowledge (e.g., one's saying: "I have seen," while in fact he has not seen, or "I have heard," while he has not heard).

Verily! The hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those you will be questioned (by Allah). And walk not on the earth with conceit and arrogance. Verily, you can neither rend nor penetrate the earth, nor can you attain a stature like the mountains in height. All the bad aspects of these (the above-mentioned things) are hateful to your Lord.” (Qur’an 17: 23-38)

Before discussing manners in these Verses, Allah ﷻ begins with a command to worship Him alone, or in other words, to believe in and apply Islamic Monotheism. This is significant because it highlights for us the relationship between manners and Islamic Monotheism. The root of all good manners is to believe in Islamic Monotheism, and the root of all bad manners is to reject Islamic Monotheism. Justice and truthfulness with one’s own self are a part of believing in Islamic Monotheism, while rejecting Islamic Monotheism involves the most evil of manners – which carry on to the rest of life – such as being too proud to accept the truth, being too arrogant to follow the Messengers ﷺ, becoming enamored with false argumentation, blindly following misguided ways, and so on. If these are the bad manners one shows to his Lord ﷻ, then how much more evil will his manners be when he deals with other human beings.

In the above-mentioned Verses, many examples of good manners, which deal with various aspects of life, are discussed – such as being dutiful to one’s parents, being good and kind to one’s relatives and to the weak, and abstaining from extravagant spending, as in the saying of Allah ﷻ:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا ۝٢٧﴾

“Verily, spendthrifts are brothers of the Shayaatin (devils), and the Shaitaan (Satan) is ever ungrateful to his Lord.”

At the same time, however, it is made clear, through an example that makes us to visualize the vileness of the deed, that miserliness is not acceptable:

﴿وَلَا يَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ﴾

"And let not your hand be tied (like a miser) to your neck."

We are commanded in the above-mentioned Verses not only to avoid bad manners and characteristics, but also to adopt positive ones; for example, we are instructed on how to speak to a poor person whom we cannot immediately help:

﴿وَإِمَّا تَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ أِبْتِغَاءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُلْ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَيْسُورًا ۝٢٨﴾

"And if you (O Muhammad ﷺ) turn away from them (kindred, poor, wayfarer, etc. whom We have ordered you to give their rights, but if you have no money at the time they ask you for it) and you are awaiting a mercy from your Lord for which you hope, then, speak unto them a soft kind word (i.e., Allah will give me and I shall give you)."

At times, the kind response without help, if sincere, is better than giving, if doing so is accompanied by reminders of one's favours and superiority.

We learn from these Verses about one particularly vile characteristic: to have a hard heart, a characteristic that is exemplified by the killing of one's own daughter, which was a common practice in Makkah before the advent of Islam. True, killing is a crime that is dealt with in Islamic courts, but in the above-mentioned Verses, it is dealt with from the perspective of having good manners and characteristics; so what is aimed at is prevention through education. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةً إِمَّا لَقِئْتُمْ نَزْفَهُمْ وَإِنْ لَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ نُفْسٌ فَهُوَ كَانَ خِطَاءً كَبِيرًا ۝٣١﴾

"And kill not your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Surely, the killing of them is a great sin."
(Qur'an 17: 31)

We are also called upon in the aforementioned Verses to work to achieve things that will Islamically benefit us, to avoid wasting our time in that which does not concern us, and to avoid speaking

without knowledge:

﴿وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا﴾ (٣٦)

“And follow not (O man, i.e., say not, or do not or witness not, etc.) that of which you have no knowledge (e.g., one’s saying: “I have seen,” while in fact he has not seen, or “I have heard,” while he has not heard). Verily! The hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those you will be questioned (by Allah).” (Qur’an 17: 36)

Because the above-mentioned Verses are comprehensive in how they call upon man to rectify his situation, Allah ﷻ concluded them by saying:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ مِمَّا أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا آخَرَ فَتُلْقَىٰ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَلُومًا مَّدْحُورًا﴾ (٣٩)

“This is (part) of Al-Hikmah (wisdom, good manners, high character, etc.) which your Lord has inspired to you (O Muhammad ﷺ). And set not up with Allah any other ilah (god) lest you should be thrown into Hell, blameworthy and rejected, (from Allah’s Mercy).” (Qur’an 17: 39)

Allah ﷻ referred to what He ﷻ mentioned in the previous Verses as being *Hikmah* (wisdom, good manners, high character, etc.), and He ﷻ ended the aforementioned set of Verses just as He ﷻ began them: with a prohibition of *Shirk* (to associate partners with Allah ﷻ in worship).

Cultivating The Manners Of The Prophet’s Companions ﷺ Through The Stories Of The Qur’an

The stories of the Qur’an are rich with profound wisdom and important lessons; they are for everyone, and not just for historians in particular. Let us briefly study one story from the Qur’an, the story of Yousuf ﷺ, by paying particular attention to

the manners and characteristics it focuses upon. Yousuf ؑ was at once a Prophet ﷺ and a leader; we will focus on those qualities of his that have to do with leadership and that we can hope to emulate. Through a close reading of "Chapter Yousuf," one can infer the following twelve qualities of leadership – among others – that Yousuf ؑ possessed, and which every leader or person of authority should aspire to possess:

- 1) To be chaste and free from evil lusts and desires: A leader needs this quality for many reasons – for instance, to set an example for others and to solidify his inner resolve and restraint. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كَذَلِكَ إِنصَرَفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ﴾

"Thus it was, that We might turn away from him evil and illegal sexual intercourse. Surely, he was one of Our chosen, guided slaves." (Qur'an 12: 24)

- 2) To show forbearance when angry, in order to achieve inner discipline:

﴿قَالُوا إِنْ يَسْرِقْ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخٌ لَّهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَأَسْرَهَا يُوسُفُ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَلَمْ يُبْدِهَا لَهُمْ قَالَ أَنْتُمْ شَرُّ مَكَانًا وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُونَ﴾
﴿٧٧﴾

"They [Yousuf's (Joseph's) brothers] said: "If he steals, there was a brother of his [Yousuf (Joseph)] who did steal before (him)." But these things did Yousuf (Joseph) keep in himself, revealing not the secrets to them. He said (within himself): "You are in worst case, and Allah knows best the truth of what you assert!" (Qur'an 12: 77)

- 3) To be lenient when lenience is called for, and to be severe when severity is called for:

﴿وَلَمَّا جَاهَرَهُمْ بِجَهَارِهِمْ قَالَ أَتُنُونِي بِأَنْعَمَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَيْكُمُ الْآلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنِّي

أَوْفَى الْكَئِيلِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَأْتُونِي بِهِ فَلَا كَيْلَ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي وَلَا تَقْرَبُونِ ﴿٦٠﴾ ﴿٦٠﴾

"And when he had furnished them forth with provisions (according to their need), he said: "Bring me a brother of yours from your father; (he meant Benjamin). See you not that I give full measure, and that I am the best of the hosts? But if you bring him not to me, there shall be no measure (of corn) for you with me, nor shall you come near me." (Qur'an 12: 59, 60)

- 4) To be sure of one's abilities while placing one's complete trust upon Allah ﷻ:

﴿قَالَ اجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلَيْهٗ﴾ ﴿٥٥﴾

"[Yousuf (Joseph)] said: "Set me over the store-houses of the land; I will indeed guard them with full knowledge" (as a minister of finance in Egypt, in place of Al-'Aziz who was dead at that time)." (Qur'an 12: 55)

- 5) To have a strong memory, a quality that serves many purposes for a good leader:

﴿وَجَاءَ إِخْوَةُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَعَرَفَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ﴾ ﴿٥٨﴾

"And Yousuf's (Joseph) brethren came and they entered unto him, and he recognized them, but they recognized him not." (Qur'an 12: 58)

- 6) To have a clear mind and conscience, thus enabling one to perceive what others cannot perceive:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ﴾ ﴿٤﴾

"(Remember) when Yousuf (Joseph) said to his father: "O my father! Verily, I saw (in a dream) eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating themselves to me." (Qur'an 12: 4)

- 7) To have a knack for learning and to love for knowledge:

﴿وَاتَّبَعْتُ مِلَّةَ آبَائِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ مَا كَانَتْ لَنَا أَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ذَلِكَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ﴾ (٣٨)

"And I have followed the religion of my fathers, – Ibraaheem (Abraham), Ishaque (Isaac) and Ya'qoob (Jacob) ﷺ, and never could we attribute any partners whatsoever to Allah. This is from the Grace of Allah to us and to mankind, but most men thank not (i.e., they neither believe in Allah, nor worship Him)." (Qur'an 12: 38)

And in another Verse:

﴿رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّ الْدُنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ﴾ (١٠)

"My Lord! You have indeed bestowed on me of the sovereignty, and taught me the interpretation of dreams; The (only) Creator of the heavens and the earth! You are my Wali (Protector, Helper, Supporter, Guardian, etc.) in this world and in the Hereafter, cause me to die as a Muslim (the one submitting to Your Will), and join me with the righteous." (Qur'an 12: 101)

- 8) To be, despite one's high station and ranking as a leader, merciful to the weak and humble when dealing with them. Consider the humbleness with which Yousuf ﷺ spoke to his fellow prisoners:

﴿يَصْصِحِي السِّجْنَ ۖ أَرْيَابُ مُتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيْرٌ أَمِ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ﴾ (٣٩)

"O two companions of the prison! Are many different lords (gods) better or Allah, the One, the Irresistible?" (Qur'an 12: 39)

Yousuf ﷺ spoke to them about both their religious and worldly concerns:

﴿قَالَ لَا يَأْتِيكُمَا طَعَامٌ تُرْزَقَانِيهِ إِلَّا نَبَأَكُمَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِ﴾

"He said : "No food will come to you (in wakefulness or in dream) as your provision, but I will inform (in wakefulness) its interpretation before it (the food) comes." (Qur'an 12: 37)

And in another Verse:

﴿إِنِّي تَرَكْتُ مِلَّةَ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ﴾

"Verily, I have abandoned the religion of a people that believe not in Allah and are disbelievers in the Hereafter (i.e., the Kan'aniun of Egypt who were polytheists and used to worship the sun and other false deities)." (Qur'an 12: 37)

As a result, Yousuf's two fellow inmates discerned his good qualities and bore witness to his righteousness and good character:

﴿وَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ السِّجْنَ فَتَيَانٍ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا إِنِّي أَرَانِي أَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ إِنِّي أَرَانِي أَحْمِلُ فَوْقَ رَأْسِي خُبْرًا تَأْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ مِنْهُ نَبَأْنَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِ إِنَّنَا نَرَبُّكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

"And there entered with him two young men in the prison. One of them said : "Verily, I saw myself (in a dream) pressing wine." The other said : "Verily, I saw myself (in a dream) carrying bread on my head and birds were eating thereof." (They said) : "Inform us of the interpretation of this. Verily, we think you are one of the Muhsinoon (doers of good)." (Qur'an 12: 36)

- 9) To forgive when one has the opportunity to exact retribution, an important quality but one that very few leaders have possessed throughout history. Consider what Yousuf عليه السلام said to the very same brothers that had previously plotted against him:

﴿قَالَ لَا تَثْرِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يَعْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾﴾

"He said: "No reproach on you this day, may Allah forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy!"
(Qur'an 12: 92)

- 10) To honour one's relatives, for if a leader is not faithful to his own family, then how can he be expected to be loyal to the citizens of his city or country? Allah ﷻ informed us that Yousuf ؑ said:

﴿أَذْهَبُوا بِقَمِيصِي هَذَا فَأَلْقُوهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِ أَبِي يَأْتِ بَصِيرًا وَأْتُونِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾ (٩٣)

"Go with this shirt of mine, and cast it over the face of my father, he will become clear-sighted, and bring to me all your family."
(Qur'an 12: 93)

- 11) To be eloquent and powerful in speech, qualities that Yousuf ؑ displayed when he interpreted the king's dream. With the quality of good speech, one gains the attention of those above him, those equal to him, and those below him in ranking. Allah ﷻ informed us that, after hearing Yousuf's truthful and eloquent speech, the king was greatly impressed:

﴿فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُ قَالَ إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ﴾

"Then, when he spoke to him, he said: "Verily, this day, you are with us high in rank and fully trusted." (Qur'an 12: 54)

- 12) To be a good and careful planner:

﴿قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ دَأَبًا فَمَا حَصَدْتُمْ فَذَرَوْهُ فِي سُنْبُلِهِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِمَّا نَأْكُلُونَ﴾ (٤٧)

"[Yousuf (Joseph)] said: "For seven consecutive years, you shall sow as usual and that (the harvest) which you reap you shall leave in ears, (all) – except a little of it which you may eat."
(Qur'an 12: 47)

How wonderful and beautiful indeed is the Qur'an for those who

delve into its teachings and contemplate its meanings!

The story of Yousuf ﷺ is but one example; all of the stories of the Qur'an are replete with examples of lofty morals and important lessons.

In the Makkan phase of the Prophet's biography, the Prophet ﷺ used various means to educate his Companions ﷺ about good manners; it is interesting to note that in Al-Madeenah, when the Muslims had their own country, there were additional means to improve the manners of Muslims. In Makkah, Muslims were called upon to change from within; this is equally true in Al-Madeenah, but there were certain additional factors that further facilitated change, or even forced it upon individuals who were weak from the inside:

1) Islamic legislation

Islamic laws, such as punishment and legally sanctioned retaliation for murder, helped to uphold a high level of moral rectitude in society. These laws helped to prevent wrongdoing, transgression, and a degeneration of moral rectitude in society.

2) Societal pressure

In Al-Madeenah, Muslims were able to do what Allah ﷻ commanded them to do, namely, to enjoin good and forbid evil. By living up to the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil, the Companions ﷺ helped to preserve a high level of moral rectitude in society. Highlighting the importance of enjoining good and forbidding evil, Allah ﷻ juxtaposed these duties with other important duties, performing prayer and giving Zakaat (obligatory charity):

﴿وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ (٧)

“The believers, men and women, are Auliya (helpers,

supporters, friends, protectors) of one another, they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e., polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); they perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), and give the Zakaat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise." (Qur'an 9: 71)

In fact, Allah ﷻ informed us that the main ingredients of success for the Muslim *Ummah* are enjoining good and forbidding evil:

﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾ (١١٠)

"You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Sunnah [legal ways, etc.]] are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma'roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained) and forbid Al-Munkar (polytheism, disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden), and you believe in Allah. And had the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) believed, it would have been better for them; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are Al-Faasiqoon (disobedient to Allah - and rebellious against Allah's command)." (Qur'an 3: 110)

It was during the Al-Madeenah phase of the Prophet's biography that the effects of enjoining good and forbidding evil were truly palpable.

3) The Authority of the Government

In an Islamic country, it is the duty of the ruler to strengthen, to the best of his ability, the moral fabric of society, a duty that is achieved through the application of Islamic law.

In this section, we have highlighted just some aspects of the

Prophet's teachings during the Makkan phase of his *Da'wah*, in terms of how he ﷺ educated his Companions ﷺ about correct Islamic beliefs, taught them how to purify their souls, and impressed upon them the importance of good manners. The Prophet's efforts in Makkah bore amazing results later on, when Muslims increased in numbers and in strength, for it was the early converts of Makkah who bore the responsibilities of leadership both during the Prophet's lifetime and after his death. Others among the early converts of Makkah shined in another way, becoming not leaders but martyrs. Of the 'Ten Who are Promised Paradise,' nine are from the early converts of Makkah. Their many sacrifices contributed to the development of the most beautiful society that mankind has ever known – sacrifices from the likes of 'Ammar ibn Yaasir, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, Abu Dharr, Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ, and others. Among the early converts was the best woman of this nation, Khadeejah ﷺ, as well as many other women who are models of piety and excellence – such as Umm Al-Fadl bint Al-Haarith ﷺ, Asmaa Dhaat An-Nitaaqain ﷺ and Asmaa bint 'Umais ﷺ.

It is not surprising that the early converts of Makkah consisted of such excellent, pious, and noble individuals, for they benefited from the tremendous blessings of the Prophet's direct company. Imagine the joy of one who was honoured with the distinction of being a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, which by definition means that he saw the Prophet ﷺ at least once during his lifetime and believed in him. Then imagine the joy of those early converts who were his Companions on a daily basis – learning from him, cultivating their manners under his tutelage, and nourishing their souls with his speech and company.



**Open Preaching, And The Means
Employed By The Polytheists To
Oppose The Prophet's *Da'wah***



I

Open Preaching

Once the Prophet ﷺ trained his early followers, having taught them about correct beliefs, worship, and manners, the time came to openly preach the message of Islam, which represented a new stage of *Da'wah* that began with the revelation of this Verse:

﴿وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ۖ (٢١٤) وَخَفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ (٢١٥) فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنَّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۚ﴾

“And warn your tribe (O Muhammad ﷺ) of near kindred. And be kind and humble to the believers who follow you. Then if they disobey you, say: “I am innocent of what you do.” (Qur’an 26: 214-216)

And so the Prophet ﷺ gathered his tribe together and invited them to believe in Allah ﷻ, warned them about a painful torment if they disobeyed Him, commanded them to save themselves from the Hellfire, and made clear to them the religious duties of every human being.

Ibn ‘Abbaas ؓ reported that, when “And warn your tribe (O Muhammad ﷺ) of near kindred” was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ ascended Mount As-Safaa and began to call out, “O children of Faihr, O children of ‘Adee,” these being the various subtribes of the Quraish. They all gathered together before the Prophet ﷺ, and if a man was not able to go himself, he sent a messenger on his behalf to find out what was happening. The Quraish, Abu Lahab

included, came, and the Prophet ﷺ said, "Suppose I informed you that horses (i.e., an army riding on horses) were in the valley (i.e., behind this mountain), intending to attack you – would you believe me?"

"Yes," they said, "We have experienced nothing from you but truthfulness."

"Then I am a warner to you," said the Prophet ﷺ, "before the time of a severe punishment."

"Woe to you for the rest of this day!" exclaimed Abu Lahab. "Is it only for this that you have gathered us together?" Then Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verses,^[1] making it clear who it was that was headed for destruction:

﴿تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ۝١ مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ ۝٢﴾

"Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab (an uncle of the Prophet ﷺ), and perish he! His wealth and his children (etc.) will not benefit him!" (Qur'an 111: 1, 2)

According to one narration, the Prophet ﷺ invited them one subtribe at a time, saying to the members of each subtribe, "Save yourselves from the Hellfire." To make the situation of his relatives crystal-clear, the Prophet ﷺ also called out to his daughter, saying, "O Faatimah, save yourself from the Hellfire, for I have no authority from Allah ﷻ to avail you in the least (in the Hereafter), except that you have ties of relation (with me), which I will join (by being good to you in this world)."^[2]

At the outset of the aforementioned meeting, the Prophet ﷺ, from on top of the mountain, was able to look at his audience and at what was behind the mountain, whereas his audience was able to look only at him. Based on his advantageous viewpoint, the Prophet ﷺ asked his audience a suitable question to establish a proof against them; their sense of justice, previous experience, and intelligence guided them to acknowledge his truthfulness. Now

[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Tafseer." *Hadeeth* number: 4770.

[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Faith." *Hadeeth* number: 204.

that this preamble was done with, and the audience had testified to his veracity, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Then I am a warner to you before the time of a severe punishment." He ﷺ said this as if to define his role as a Prophet and to make it clear that he ﷺ alone among them had knowledge of realities that had to do with the unseen world. In a wise and eloquent manner, using both visual effect and pithy speech, the Prophet ﷺ informed the Quraish that he was a Prophet ﷺ sent to them from Allah ﷻ.

Even though the Prophet ﷺ was sent to all of mankind, it was only natural that he ﷺ should begin with his tribe. Why? First, one should always begin with oneself, then with one's family and close friends, for it is neither wise nor correct to invite a stranger to the truth before inviting one's own relatives. Second, there was a strong sense of tribal loyalty among the Quraish, so that, if the Prophet ﷺ succeeded in garnering the support of Quraish's members, they would help him, support his *Da'wah*, and protect him. Third, Makkah was of great religious significance to the polytheists of Arabia; hence Islam would greatly benefit if Makkah's inhabitants became Muslims. For these and other reasons, the Prophet ﷺ began by preaching to the Quraish, even though, as the following Verses make amply clear, he ﷺ was sent as a Messenger ﷺ to all of mankind:

﴿بَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا﴾ ①

"Blessed be He Who sent down the criterion (of right and wrong, i.e., this Qur'an) to His slave (Muhammad ﷺ) that he may be a warner to the 'Alamin (mankind and jinns)." (Qur'an 25: 1)

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾ ②

"And We have sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) not but as a mercy for the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)." (Qur'an 21: 107)

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ ③

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not.” (Qur’an 34: 28)

The next stage quickly followed, and the Prophet ﷺ began to invite everyone he came across, regardless of their tribal affiliations or countries of origin. He ﷺ went himself to people in their gatherings and took special advantage of the *Hajj* season, when many people of various tribes congregated in Makkah for the yearly pilgrimage. During this stage of his *Da’wah*, the Prophet ﷺ invited the free person and the slave, the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor. This more comprehensive preaching began with the revelation of this Verse:

﴿فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۚ﴾ ٩٤ إِنَّا كَفَيْنَاكَ الْمُسْتَهْزِينَ ۚ ٩٥ الَّذِينَ يَجْعَلُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ۚ ٩٦ وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ۚ ٩٧ ﴿

“Therefore proclaim openly (Allah’s Message – Islamic Monotheism) that which you are commanded, and turn away from Al-Mushrikoon (polytheists, idolaters, and disbelievers, etc.). Truly! We will suffice you against the scoffers. Who set up along with Allah another ilah (god), they will come to know. Indeed, We know that your breast is straitened at what they say.” (Qur’an 15: 94-97)

What resulted from this open preaching? People, for the most part, disbelieved; some among them mocked or even harmed Muslims; other plotted against Islam. A great struggle began between the Prophet ﷺ along with his Companions ﷺ and the leaders of the polytheists. But not everything was negative in those early days: news of the said struggle spread rapidly by word of mouth, which in itself was a great victory for the Muslims, a victory in which the leaders of the polytheists were unwitting helpers. For when the leaders of the polytheists spoke evil words about Islam to people from other tribes, not everyone believed them, and so that is how they unwittingly informed

others about Islam. After all, the only means of spreading news during those days was oral communication. And it was by word of mouth that people from far off places learned of the Prophet's message. True, not many people embraced Islam in those early days of the Prophet's mission; but at least everyone was talking about it in their gatherings and homes, which was, if nothing else, a first step.

What The Polytheists Rejected

Of course, the most important teachings of Islam that the polytheists rejected were belief in the Oneness of Allah ﷻ, in the Hereafter, in the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, and in the Noble Qur'an. In what follows is a brief analysis of the Islamic beliefs that the polytheists rejected:

Islamic Monotheism

The polytheists of Makkah did not deny the fact that Allah ﷻ created both them and all things. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٢٥﴾

"And if you (O Muhammad ﷺ) ask them: 'Who has created the heavens and the earth,' they will certainly say: 'Allah.' Say: 'All the praises and thanks be to Allah!'" But most of them know not." (Qur'an 31: 25)

Nonetheless, they worshipped idols, claiming that doing so brought them closer to Allah ﷻ:

﴿أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ ٣﴾

"Surely, the religion (i.e., the worship and the obedience) is for Allah only. And those who take Auliya' (protectors and helpers)

besides Him (say): "We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah." Verily, Allah will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allah guides not him who is a liar, and a disbeliever." (Qur'an 39: 3)

Makkah was originally a place wherein pure Islamic Monotheism had reigned. Ibraaheem, Ismaa'eel عليه السلام, and their progeny worshipped Allah ﷻ alone, without associating partners with Him. But generations later, polytheism was transported into Makkah from neighbouring lands. And it wasn't very long before polytheism became the norm in society, whereas monotheism became the very rare exception. This is why the inhabitants of Makkah, in whose minds polytheism was deeply ingrained, rejected the Prophet's message as vehemently as they did, even feeling a sense of wonder that a Prophet ﷺ came to them from among themselves:

﴿وَعَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ ۝٤ أَجَعَلَ الْإِلَهَةَ الْإِلَٰهًا وَحِدًا إِنَّا هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ ۝٥ وَاطْلُوقِ الْمَلَأُ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ آمَنُوا بِأَصْدِرُوا عَلَىٰ ءَالِهَتِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ يُرَادُ ۚ مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي آلِئَلَةِ الْآخِرَةِ إِن هَذَا إِلَّا أَخْلَاقٌ ۝٧﴾

"And they (Arab pagans) wonder that a warner (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) has come to them from among themselves! And the disbelievers say: "This (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) is a sorcerer, a liar. Has he made the aliha (gods) (all) into One Ilah (God – Allah). Verily, this is a curious thing!" And the leaders among them went about (saying): "Go one, and remain constant to your aliha (gods)! Verily, This is a thing designed (against you)! We have not heard (the like) of this among the people of these later days. This is nothing but an invention!" (Qur'an 38: 4-7)

Their perception or understanding of Allah ﷻ and His relation to what He ﷻ created was utterly wrong; for example, they claimed that Allah ﷻ had a female companion from the jinn, that she conceived the angels, and that the angels are daughters of Allah ﷻ! And so Allah ﷻ revealed Verses which made it absolutely clear that Allah ﷻ created both jinns and angels, just as He ﷻ created human

beings; that He ﷻ has no female companion; and that He ﷻ has no children: He begets not, nor is He begotten. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ وَخَرَفُوا لَهُ بَنِينَ وَبَنَاتٍ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ سُبْحَنَهُ
وَعَلَىٰ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ بَدِيعَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَتَىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ
لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾﴾

“Yet they join the jinns as partners in worship with Allah, though He has created them (the jinns), and they attribute falsely without knowledge sons and daughters to Him. Be He Glorified and Exalted above (all) that they attribute to Him. He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How can He have children when He has no wife? He created all things and He is the All-Knower of everything.” (Qur’an 6: 100, 101)

Allah ﷻ also informed them that the jinns acknowledge the fact that they are slaves of Allah ﷻ and have no other relation to Him ﷻ:

﴿وَجَعَلُوا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْجِنَّةِ نَسَبًا وَلَقَدْ عَلِمَتِ الْجِنَّةُ إِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾﴾

“And they have invented a kinship between Him and the jinns, but the jinns know well that they have indeed to appear (before Him) (i.e., they will be brought for accounts).” (Qur’an 37: 158)

Allah ﷻ commanded the polytheists to follow the truth and correct knowledge, and to reject false notions and guesses:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّونَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ سَمِيَةً الْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ
عِلْمٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا ﴿٧٨﴾﴾

“Verily, those who believe not in the Hereafter, name the angels with female names. While they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a guess, and verily, guess is no substitute for the truth.” (Qur’an 53: 27, 28)

And Allah ﷻ pointed out that, based on their very own thinking, the polytheists were contradicting themselves. According to them, daughters were of lesser value than sons, yet they had

the temerity to claim that Allah ﷻ, their Creator, granted them sons, yet kept daughters – the angels – for Himself:

﴿أَفَأَصْفَكَ رَبُّكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنْتًا إِنَّكُمْ لَقَوْلُونَ قَوْلًا عَظِيمًا﴾ (٤٠)

“Has then your Lord (O pagans of Makkah) preferred for you sons, and taken for Himself from among the angels daughters. Verily! You utter an awful saying, indeed.” (Qur’an 17: 40)

Finally, Allah ﷻ informed the polytheists that they will indeed be questioned and held accountable for all of their baseless claims:

﴿وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنْتًا أَشْهَدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ سَتُكْتَبُ شَهَادَتُهُمْ وَيُسْأَلُونَ﴾ (١٩)

“And they make the angels who themselves are the slaves to the Most Beneficent (Allah) females. Did they witness their creation? Their evidence will be recorded, and they will be questioned!” (Qur’an 43: 19)

Faith In The Hereafter

The polytheists answered the Prophet’s call to believe in the Last Day with disdain, mockery, and disbelief:

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ نَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ إِذَا مُزِقْتُمْ كُلٌّ مِّنْكُمْ إِنَّا لَنُفِئُ خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ۖ أَفَقَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَمْ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ بَلِ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ فِي الْعَذَابِ وَالضَّلَالِ الْبَعِيدِ﴾ (٨)

“Those who disbelieve say: ‘Shall we direct you to a man (Muhammad ﷺ) who will tell you (that) when you have become fully disintegrated into dust with full dispersion, then, you will be created (again) anew?’ Has he (Muhammad ﷺ) invented a lie against Allah, or is there a madness in him? Nay, but those who disbelieve in the Hereafter are (themselves) in a torment, and in far error.” (Qur’an 34: 7, 8)

Also, they altogether disbelieved in resurrection after death:

﴿وَقَالُوا إِن هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ٢٩﴾

“And they said : “There is no (other life) but our (present) life of this world, and never shall we be resurrected (on the Day of Resurrection).” (Qur’an 6: 29)

They were so sure and confident about their false beliefs that they swore by Allah ﷻ with their strongest oaths that they will not be resurrected after death:

﴿وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَمُوتُ بَلَى وَعَدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٣٨﴾ لَيْسَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي يُخْتَلَفُونَ فِيهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَاذِبِينَ ٣٩﴾

“And they swear by Allah their strongest oaths, that Allah will not raise up him who dies. Yes, (He will raise them up), – a promise (binding) upon Him in truth, but most of mankind know not. In order that He may make manifest to them the truth of that wherein they differ, and that those who disbelieved (in Resurrection, and in the Oneness of Allah) may know that they were liars.” (Qur’an 16: 38, 39)

These Verses further illustrate their disbelief in Resurrection and the Hereafter:

﴿وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ٤٤﴾ وَإِذَا نُنَادُوا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنِمْ نُبْنِئْ مَا كَانَ حُجَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ بِنَابِنَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ٥٥﴾ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُخَيِّكُم مِّمَّ يَخِيكُمُ ثُمَّ يُجْمَعُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٦١﴾ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُومِذُ يَحْسَرُ الْمُبْطِلُونَ ٦٧﴾

“And they say : “there is nothing but our life of this world, we die and we live and nothing destroys us except Ad-Dahr (time). And they have no knowledge of it, they only conjecture. And when

Our Clear Verses are recited to them, their argument is no other than that they say: "Bring back our (dead) fathers, if you are truthful!" Say (to them): "Allah gives you life, then causes you to die, then He will assemble you on the Day of Resurrection about which there is no doubt. But most of mankind know not." And to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. And on the Day that the Hour will be established, – on that Day the followers of falsehood (polytheists, disbelievers, worshippers of false deities, etc.) shall lose (everything)." (Qur'an 45: 24-27)

They were not guided to understand that the One Who created them the first time is able to give them life on the Day of Resurrection. Mujaahid and others related that Ubai ibn Khalaf^[1] once went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with a decayed bone in his hand. As he broke the bone into small pieces and scattered those pieces into the wind, he said, "O Muhammad, do you claim that Allah will resurrect this?" The Prophet ﷺ answered, "Yes, Allah ﷻ will cause you to die; then He will resurrect you; and then He will thrust you into the Hellfire." These Verses were then revealed^[2] :

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ
(٧٧) وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَنْ يُعِى الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ (٧٨) قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا
الَّذِى أَشْأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ (٧٩)﴾

"Does not man see that We have created him from Nutfah (mixed male and female discharge – semen drops). Yet behold! He (stands forth) as an open opponent. And he puts forth for Us a parable, and forgets his own creation. He says: "Who will give life to these bones when they have rotted away and became dust?" Say: (O Muhammad ﷺ) "He will give life to them Who created them for the first time! And He is the All-Knower of every creation!" (Qur'an 36: 77-79)

^[1] According to a narration from Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ, it was Al-'Aas ibn Waail, and not Ubai ibn Khalaf, who went to the Prophet ﷺ on this occasion.

^[2] Tafseer Ibn Katheer (3/581).

To convince people about the Resurrection, Allah ﷻ addressed their minds. He ﷻ reminded them that His Wisdom dictates that He ﷻ should resurrect His slaves for accountability and recompense. After all, Allah ﷻ created mankind to worship Him; He ﷻ then sent Messengers ﷺ and Books, in order to make clear to mankind how they should worship Him. Some of His slaves obey Him, and others disobey Him. Is it not wise and just, therefore, that Allah ﷻ should then recompense each person according to his deeds? Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَفَجَعَلَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ ۚ (٣٥) مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ ۚ (٣٦) أَمْ لَكُمْ كِتَابٌ فِيهِ تَدْرُسُونَ ۚ (٣٧) إِنَّ لَكُمْ فِيهِ لَمَا تَخَيَّرُونَ ۚ (٣٨)﴾

“Shall We then treat the (submitting) Muslims like the Mujrimoon (criminals, polytheists, and disbelievers, etc.)? What is the matter with you? How judge you? Or have you a Book through which you learn. That you shall have all that you choose?” (Qur’an 68: 35-38)

And Allah ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَطْلًا ۚ ذَلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ قَوْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ ۚ (٣٧) أَمْ يَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ ۚ (٣٨)﴾

“And We created not the heaven and the earth and all that is between them without purpose! That is the consideration of those who disbelieve! Then woe to those who disbelieve (in Islamic Monotheism) from the Fire! Shall We treat those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, as Mufsidun (those who associate partners in worship with Allah and commit crimes) on earth? Or shall We treat the Muttaqoon (pious) as the Fujjar (criminals, disbelievers, wicked, etc)?” (Qur’an 38: 27, 28)

To further convince people, Allah ﷻ reminded them about how He ﷻ brings life to the earth through vegetation after it was once

dead, the point here being that the One Who brings life to the earth after its death is fully able to bring life back to rotting corpses and decaying bones:

﴿فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ ءَاثَرِ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمُنْجَىٰ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝﴾

"Look them at the effects (results) of Allah's Mercy, how He revives the earth after its death. Verily! That (Allah) Who revived the earth after its death shall indeed raise the dead (on the Day of Resurrection), and He is Able to do all things." (Qur'an 30: 50)

Allah ﷻ also mentioned particular instances of how he brought certain people back to life in this world, as in the example of the People of the Cave. After making them lie in slumber for 309 years, Allah ﷻ raised them up to life. He ﷻ said:

﴿ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَىٰ لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا ۝﴾

"Then We raised them up (from their sleep), that We might test which of the two parties was best at calculating the time period that they had tarried." (Qur'an 18: 12)

He ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿وَكَذَٰلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا ۝﴾

"Likewise, We awakened them (from their long deep sleep) that they might question one another. A speaker from among them said: "How long have you stayed (here)?" They said: "We have stayed (perhaps) a day or part of a day." They said: "Your Lord (Alone) knows best how long you have stayed (here). So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the town, and let him find out which is the good lawful food, and bring some of that to you."

And let him be careful and let no man know of you." (Qur'an 18: 19)

And He ﷻ said in yet another Verse:

﴿وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا ۝٢٥﴾

"And they stayed in their Cave three hundred (solar) years, and add nine (for lunar years)." (Qur'an 18: 25)

Belief In The Prophethood And Messengership Of Muhammad ﷺ

The polytheists attacked the Prophet ﷺ from various angles. First, they claimed that a Messenger from Allah ﷻ should be an angel, and not a human being like them; or at the very least, that an angel should accompany him. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ بَشَرًا رَسُولًا ۝٩٤﴾

"And nothing prevented men from believing when the guidance came to them, except that they said: "Has Allah sent a man as (His) Messenger?" (Qur'an 17: 94)

And He ﷻ said in another Chapter:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ وَلَوْ أَنزَلْنَا مَلَكَ لَفُضِيَ الْقَوْمُ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْظَرُونَ ۝٨ وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ مَلَكَ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ رَجُلًا وَلَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَا يَلِيسُونَ ۝٩﴾

"And they say: "Why has not an angel been sent down to him?" Had We sent down an angel, the matter would have been judged at once, and no respite would be granted to them. And had We appointed him an angel, We indeed would have made him a man, and We would have certainly caused them confusion in a matter which they have already covered with confusion (i.e., the message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ)." (Qur'an 6: 8, 9)

Furthermore, they claimed that a Messenger from Allah ﷻ should

not eat food, and shouldn't walk in the marketplace as other human beings do:

﴿وَقَالُوا مَا لِهَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونُ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا ﴿٧﴾ أَوْ يُنْفَخَ إِلَيْهِ كَفَرٌ أَوْ تَكُونُ لَهُم جَنَّةٌ يَأْكُلُ مِنْهَا وَقَالَ الظَّالِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا ﴿٨﴾﴾

"And they say: "Why does this Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) eat food, and walk about in the markets (like ourselves). Why is not an angel sent down to him to be a warner with him? Or (why) has not a treasure been granted to him, or why has he not a garden whereof he may eat?" And the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.) say: "You follow none but a man bewitched." (Qur'an 25: 7, 8)

They failed to comprehend that if an angel were sent to them, they would also have refused to follow him, for they would have argued the impossibility of emulating the actions and deeds of beings that have powers which they do not possess. But a man from among them was sent, so that they could know that human beings can follow him, if Allah ﷻ guides them. Also, all Prophets ﷺ who came before Muhammad ﷺ were human beings who would eat and work:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا إِنَّهُمْ لَيَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشُونَ فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ فِتْنَةً أَنْتَصِرُونَ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

"And We never sent before you (O Muhammad ﷺ) any of the Messengers but verily, they ate food and walked in the markets. And We have made some of you as a trial for others: will you have patience? And your Lord is Ever All-Seer (of everything)." (Qur'an 25: 20)

Out of their brazenness and arrogance, they thought that a Messenger from Allah ﷻ should live up to their conditions: That

he be rich as well as powerful and eminent in their judgment:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ﴾ (٣١)

"And they say: "Why is not this Qur'an sent down to some great man of the two towns (Makkah and Ta'if)?" (Qur'an 43: 31)

The two 'great' men they were referring to are Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah (from Makkah) and 'Urwah ibn Mas'ood Ath-Thaqafei (from Ta'if).^[1]

Despite the fact that the polytheists knew that the Prophet ﷺ was superior to them in intellect, they, in order to misguide others, claimed that he ﷺ was insane:

﴿وَقَالُوا يَكْفُورُ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ ۖ لَّوْ مَا تَأْتِينَا بِالْمَلَكِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِیْنَ﴾ (٧)

"And they say: "O you (Muhammad ﷺ) to whom the Dhikr (the Qur'an) has been sent down! Verily, you are a mad man. Why do you not bring angels to us if you are of the truthful?" (Qur'an 15: 6, 7)

Allah ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿أَنَّى لَهُمُ الذِّكْرَىٰ وَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ ۖ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا مُعَلَّمٌ مَّجْنُونٌ﴾ (١٤)

"How can there be for them an admonition (at the time when the torment has reached them), when a Messenger explaining things clearly has already come to them. Then they had turned away from him (Messenger Muhammad ﷺ) and said: "One (Muhammad ﷺ) taught (by a human being), a madman!" (Qur'an 44: 13, 14)

And Allah ﷻ refuted them by saying:

﴿مَا أَنتَ بِمُعَلِّمٍ لِّرَبِّكَ يَمَجُّونَ﴾ (٢)

^[1] Tafseer Ibn Katheer (4/126, 127).

"You (O Muhammad ﷺ) are not, by the Grace of your Lord, a madman." (Qur'an 68: 2)

And although they knew that the Prophet ﷺ was not endowed with the ability to produce poetry, they claimed that he ﷺ was merely a poet; likewise, they knew that he ﷺ was in no way similar to soothsayers, yet they nevertheless made the claim that he was a soothsayer, intending thereby to discredit him ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَذَكِّرْ مَا أَنْتَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَلَا مَجْنُونٍ ۚ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَتَرَبَّصُّ بِهِ رَبِّ الْعَمُونَ ۚ﴾ (٢٠)

"Therefore, remind and preach (mankind of Islamic Monotheism, O Muhammad ﷺ). By the Grace of Allah, you are neither a soothsayer, nor a madman. Or do they say: (Muhammad ﷺ is) a poet! We await for him some calamity by time!" (Qur'an 52: 29, 30)

They furthermore claimed that he ﷺ was a liar, even though, prior to his Prophethood, they themselves knew him as the 'Truthful, Trustworthy One.' And even after he ﷺ became the recipient of revelation, they called him a liar on the one hand, and trusted their valuable merchandise to him on the other hand, knowing full well that they could trust no one else as much as they could trust him. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَعَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ ۚ﴾ (٤)

"And they (Arab pagans) wonder that a warner (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) has come to them from among themselves! And the disbelievers say: "This (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) is a sorcerer, a liar." (Qur'an 38: 4)

And Allah ﷻ said in another chapter, mentioning another one of their claims:

﴿تَحْنُ أَعْمُرُ بِمَا يَسْمِعُونَ بِهِ ۚ إِذْ يَسْمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِذْ هُمْ نَجْوَىٰ إِذْ يَقُولُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا ۚ﴾ (٤٧) *أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا لَكَ الْأَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوا فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلًا ۚ﴾ (٤٨)*

"We know best of what they listen to, when they listen to you. And when they take secret counsel, behold, the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) say: "You follow none but a bewitched man." See what examples they have put forward for you. So they have gone astray, and never can they find a way." (Qur'an 17: 47, 48)

In response to the lies and mockery of the polytheists, Allah ﷻ sent down a stern warning:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَسْنَهَيْتَ رُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ﴾^(١٠)

"And indeed (many) Messengers were mocked before you, but their scoffers were surrounded by the very thing that they used to mock at." (Qur'an 6: 10)

The polytheists inwardly knew the truth, but they were too arrogant to accept it; so having nothing else at their disposal, they resorted to false claims and accusations in order to turn people away from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لَيَحْزَنُكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُونَكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِعَايَةِ اللَّهِ يَاجِدُونَ﴾^(٣٣)

"We know indeed the grief which their words cause you (O Muhammad ﷺ): it is not you that they deny, but it is the Verses (the Qur'an) of Allah that the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers) deny." (Qur'an 6: 33)

Belief In The Noble Qur'an

Not believing the Qur'an to be revelation from Allah ﷻ, they considered it to be a form of poetry, even though anyone who compares the Qur'an with Arab poetry knows for certain that the former is completely different from the latter. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْآنٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾^(٦٩) يَلْمِزُ

مَنْ كَانَ حَيًّا وَيَحْيِ الْقَوْلُ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾ ﴿٧٠﴾

“And We have not taught him (Muhammad ﷺ) poetry, nor is it meet for him. This is only a Reminder and a plain Qur’an. That he or it (Muhammad ﷺ or the Qur’an) may give warning to him who is living (a healthy minded – the believer), and that Word (charge) may be justified against the disbelievers (dead, as they reject the warnings).” (Qur’an 36: 69, 70)

The Qur’an has nothing to do with poetry; in fact, in the Qur’an, poets are censured because they – at least most of them – misguide mankind and speak contrary to what is true and real. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ ﴿٢٢٤﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ﴿٢٢٥﴾ وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٢٦﴾﴾

“As for the poets, the erring follow them. See you not that they speak about every subject (praising others – right or wrong) in their poetry? And that they say what they do not do.” (Qur’an 26: 224-226)

In another Chapter of the Qur’an, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ وَلَا يَقُولُ كَاهِنٌ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذْكُرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ نَزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

“That this is verily the word of an honoured Messenger [i.e., Jibreel (Gabriel) or Muhammad ﷺ which he has brought from Allah]. It is not the word of a poet, little is that you believe! Nor is it the word of a soothsayer (or a foreteller), little is that you remember! This is the revelation sent down from the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists).” (Qur’an 69: 40-43)

Not having legitimate proofs to back up their beliefs, the polytheists would often make ludicrous claims. For example, they said, “Muhammad learns the Qur’an from a foreigner (i.e., a non-Arab).” The foreigner they were referring to was a hired

seller who spoke very little Arabic – just enough to engage in only a simple conversation. And that is why Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجِبُوا وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾﴾

“And indeed We know that they (polytheists and pagans) say : “It is only a human being who teaches him (Muhammad ﷺ).” The tongue of the man they refer to is foreign, while this (the Qur’an) is a clear Arabic tongue.” (Qur’an 16: 103)

Just reflect on how preposterous their claim was: They said that the Qur’an, with its unparalleled eloquence and linguistic beauty, was composed by a person who could barely speak Arabic! Only someone with a very weak grip on reality could make such a claim. They also decried the manner in which the Qur’an was being revealed; they requested that it should all be revealed at once, even though it being revealed in stages was more conducive to strengthening the hearts of the believers, to their understanding the Qur’an, to their memorizing the Qur’an, and to their applying its teachings. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾﴾

“And those who disbelieve say : “Why is not the Qur’an revealed to him all at once?” Thus (it is sent down in parts), that We may strengthen your heart thereby. And We have revealed it to you gradually, in stages. (It was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ in 23 years).” (Qur’an 25: 32)

After the polytheists openly disbelieved in the Qur’an, Allah ﷻ challenged them to produce something similar to it; and He ﷻ also informed them about the outcome of that challenge beforehand.

﴿قُلْ لِّينِ أَجْتَعَبَ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٨٨﴾﴾

"Say : "If the mankind and the jinns were together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another." (Qur'an 17: 88)

In fact, they were not even able to produce something that is similar to only 10 Chapters of the Qur'an:

﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مِثْلِهِ مُفْتَرِيْنَ وَادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١٣﴾ فَاَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوْا لَكُمْ فَاَعْلَمُوْا اَنْمَآ اَنْزَلَ يَعْزِمُ اللّٰهُ وَاَنْ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ فَهَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾

"Or they say, "He (Prophet ﷺ) forged it (the Qur'an)." Say: "Bring you then ten forged Soorahs (Chapters) like unto it, and call whomsoever you can, other than Allah (to your help), if you speak the truth!" If then they answer you not, know then that the revelation (this Qur'an) is sent down with the Knowledge of Allah and that La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He)! Will you then be Muslims (those who submit to Islam)?" (Qur'an 11: 13, 14)

The challenge was a perfect refutation of the polytheists when it was made clear that they couldn't even produce something that is similar to only one Chapter of the Qur'an:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ هٰذَا الْقُرْءَانُ اَنْ يُفْتَرٰى مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلٰكِنْ تَصْدِيْقَ الَّذِى بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ مِنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾ اَمْ يَقُولُوْنَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُوْرَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٣٨﴾﴾

"And this Qur'an is not such as could ever be produced by other than Allah (Lord of the heavens and the earth), but it is a confirmation of (the revelation) which was before it [i.e., the Taurat (Torah), and the Injeel (Gospel), etc.], and a full explanation of the Book (i.e., laws and orders, etc, decreed for mankind) – wherein there is no doubt from the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists), Or do they say: "He (Muhammad ﷺ) has forged it?" Say: "Bring then a Soorah

(Chapter) like unto it, and call upon whomsoever you can, besides Allah, if you are truthful!" (Qur'an 10: 37, 38)

One must keep in mind that the Arabs were known for their poetry and eloquence. Having no other claim to fame, they held poetry competitions and the winners' poems would be hung up onto the wall of the Ka'bah. Yet despite their eloquence, they couldn't meet the aforementioned challenges, which clearly proves that the Qur'an is Allah's speech. There is nothing that is similar to Allah ﷻ Himself, to His attributes, to His actions – and to His sayings and speech.

Some Of The Reasons Why Most Of The Quraish Rejected The Message Of Islam

Some Islamic historians and researchers have discussed at least some of the reasons that prompted the Quraish to reject the Prophet's *Da'wah*; among the reasons they mentioned are the following:

1) The weak impact that the messages of previous Prophets ﷺ had on the Arabian Peninsula

The Arabs, to whom Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent, were not even remotely interested in previous Prophets ﷺ and the laws that were revealed to them. What the Arabs believed in and practiced could not really be called a religion; true, they bowed down to idols, but they were not governed by a set of moral or religious laws. And contrary to the Christians and Jews, they did not spend any time studying divinely revealed Books; and so Allah ﷻ established the proof against them by sending His Messenger ﷺ to them. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۝١٥٠﴾ أَنْ تَقُولُوا
إِنَّمَا أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ عَلَى طَائِفَتَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا وَإِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ دِرَاسَتِهِمْ لَغَفِيلِينَ
﴿١٥١﴾ أَوْ تَقُولُوا لَوْ أَنَّا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْكِتَابُ لَكُنَّا أَهْدَى مِنْهُمْ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ

مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَهَدَىٰ وَرَحْمَةً فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَصَدَفَ عَنْهَا
سَنَجْزِي الَّذِينَ يَصْدِفُونَ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْدِفُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ ﴿١٥٧﴾

"And this is a blessed Book (the Qur'an) which We have sent down, so follow it and fear Allah (i.e., do not disobey His Orders), that you may receive mercy (i.e., saved from the torment of Hell). Lest you (pagan Arabs) should say: "The Book was only sent down to two sects before us (the Jews and the Christians), and for our part, we were in fact unaware of what they studied." Or lest you (pagan Arabs) should say: "If only the Book had been sent down to us, we would surely have been better guided than they (Jews and Christians)." So now has come unto you a clear proof (the Qur'an) from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy. Who then does more wrong than one who rejects the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah and turns away therefrom? We shall requite those who turn away from Our Ayaat with an evil torment, because of their turning away (from them)." (Qur'an 6: 155-157)

Polytheism was deeply ingrained in the minds, hearts, and souls of the Quraish; any change on their part, therefore, required a major inward transformation. Also, since they did not believe in any divinely revealed religion, their hearts had hardened, and they became a materialistic people, caring only for their worldly welfare. And so when the message of Islam threatened their authority in Makkah, they were willing to expend all of their energies in order to protect the authority and wealth to which they had become accustomed.

2) They had a fanatical attachment to the ways and customs of their fathers

Customs and traditions have a strong hold on human beings. If one is born a Hindu, for example, it is very hard for him to change, no matter how many clear proofs he witnesses that establish the falsehood of his religion. Fanatical loyalty to the

ways of one's forefathers was the strongest reason that caused people to reject the messages of Prophets ﷺ and Messengers ﷺ. For many people, it is easier to sacrifice their lives than to change what has become customary for them. In the Noble Qur'an, Allah ﷻ pointed to how blind following of one's forefathers was a disease that afflicted previous nations. The following Verses contain a discourse between Ibraaheem ﷺ and his people:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ۖ قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَظُلُّ لَهَا عَكَثِينَ ۖ قَالُوا هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكَ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ ۖ أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكَ أَوْ يَضُرُّونَ ۚ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ۖ﴾ (٧٠-٧٣)

"When he said to his father and his people: "What do you worship?" They said: "We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted." He said: "Do they hear you, when you call (on them)? "Or do they benefit you or do they harm (you)?" They said: "Nay, but we found our fathers doing so." (Qur'an 26: 70-74)

Throughout the centuries, whenever Prophets ﷺ and righteous believers reproached their people for gratifying their evil desires, they excused themselves by citing the examples of their forefathers:

﴿وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا فَحْشَةً قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَا آبَاءَنَا وَاللَّهُ أَمَرَنَا بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۖ﴾ (٢٨)

"They say: "We found our fathers doing it, and Allah has commanded us of it." Say: "Nay, Allah never commands of Fahisha. Do you say of Allah what you know not?" (Qur'an 7: 28)

They had no proof to validate their actions – no revealed book, no logical arguments – and so they justified what they did by citing the examples of their forefathers. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَهْرَةً وَبَاطِنَةً ۚ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا

كُنُوبٍ مُّنبِرٍ ۚ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَتَّبِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَحَدَّنَا عَلَيْهِ
ءَابَاءُنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٣١﴾

“See you not (O men) that Allah has subjected for you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, and has completed and perfected His Graces upon you, (both) apparent (i.e., Islamic Monotheism, and the lawful pleasures of this world, including health good looks, etc.) and hidden [i.e., One’s faith in Allah (of Islamic Monotheism) knowledge, wisdom, guidance for doing righteous deeds, and also the pleasures and delights of the Hereafter in Paradise, etc.]. Yet of mankind is he who disputes about Allah without knowledge or guidance or a Book giving light! And when it is said to them: “Follow that which Allah has sent down,” they say: “Nay, we shall follow that which we found our fathers (following).” (Would they do so) even if *Shaitaan* (Satan) invites them to the torment of the Fire.” (Qur’an 31: 20, 21)

In misguiding the polytheists, *Shaitaan* took advantage of an inborn characteristic that is found in all human beings – a sense of loyalty to one’s father and grandparents. *Shaitaan* often attacks his victims through an inborn characteristic or desire – lust, love of country, love of wealth, etc. – and then attempts to develop it in their minds until they go to extremes. So, for the polytheists of Makkah, what was originally a natural and inborn sense of loyalty to forefathers became a fanatical concept that hindered them from accepting the truth. The Prophet ﷺ pointed out such deception on the part of *Shaitaan* when he ﷺ said, “Verily, *Shaitaan* lies in wait for the son of Adam upon the paths [he travels by (figuratively speaking)]. *Shaitaan* waits for him on the path of Islam and says, ‘Will you embrace Islam and forsake your religion, the religion of your fathers, the religion of your fathers’ fathers?’ He (the son of Adam) disobeys him and embraces Islam. Then *Shaitaan* sits waiting for him on the path of *Hijrah* and says, ‘Will you migrate (perform *Hijrah*), and forsake your land and your sky? And indeed, the example of a *Muhaajir* (one who

migrates) is that of a horse that is tied up in a rope (the *Shaitaan* is trying to insinuate that a *Muhaajir* is constricted in his lifestyle, whereas the native dwellers of a land are free to live in comfort).’ He (the son of Adam) disobeys him and performs *Hijrah*. Then *Shaitaan* sits waiting for him on the path of *Jihaad* and says, ‘Will you perform *Jihaad*! It weakens one’s soul and one’s store of wealth. Then one fights and is killed, upon which his wife remarries, and his wealth is distributed.’ He disobeys him and performs *Jihaad*.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said, “If one does that (i.e., whoever disobeys *Shaitaan* in all that is mentioned above), then it is a right upon Allah ‘Azza wa-Jall (the Possessor of might and majesty) to admit him into Paradise. And if he drowns, then it is a right upon Allah to admit him into Paradise. Or if he falls off of his mount and dies as a result, it is a right upon Allah to admit him into Paradise.”^[1]

When the Prophet ﷺ began to spread the message of Islam, one of the accusations leveled against him was that he invited people to follow a way that was contrary to the way of the forefathers of the Quraish. The leaders of the polytheists used this accusation to turn commoners away from the Prophet ﷺ and Islam.

3) The position taken by the People of the Book strengthened the resolve of the polytheists

Having been accustomed to polytheism for generations, the Quraish were sufficiently set in their ways, so that it became unlikely that they would readily embrace Islamic Monotheism. But their resolve not to change strengthened when they witnessed the stance that Jews and Christians took vis-à-vis Islam. They were the people of the Torah and the *Injeel*, the inheritors of divinely revealed Books, yet they disbelieved in and rejected the message of Muhammad ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَنْطَلَقَ الْأَلَاءُ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ أَمْسُوا وَاصْبِرُوا عَلَىٰ الْهَيْكَلِ إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ يُرَادُ ۖ مَا

^[1] *An-Nasaaee*, “The Book of *Jihaad*.” (6/21, 22).

﴿٧﴾ مِمَّنَّا هَذَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا أَخْلَقُ

“And the leaders among them went about (saying): “Go on, and remain constant to your aliha (gods)! Verily, this a thing designed (against you)! We have not heard (the like) of this among the people of these later days. This is nothing but an invention!”
(Qur'an 38: 6, 7)

Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ, As-Siddee ؓ, Muhammad ibn Ka'ab Al-Quradhee, Qataadah, and Mujaahid^[1] – they all said that “people of these later days” refers to Christians, an opinion that is based on the testimony of the People of the Book against the Messenger ؐ; it could not have been otherwise, since the Arabs had no knowledge about divinely revealed Books, nor about the realities and information contained in those Books.

4) The strong hold that tribal customs and norms had on the Quraish

Inter-tribal strife was a common feature of life in the Arabian Peninsula prior to the advent of Islam. Each tribe strove for superior power, honour, and status; and even within a tribe, the matter of choosing a leader was at once highly competitive and based upon inherited norms and customs. Consequently, people from the same subtribe of the Prophet ؐ complained that he ؐ was not one of their elder, honoured leaders. Those from other subtribes rejected Islam partly because they feared for their authority and status. And people from foreign tribes rejected Islam in order to avoid becoming weaker in relation to the Quraish, but also out of tribal pride: they didn't want to follow an individual who was not a member of their tribe. Consider the following narration, in which Mugheerah ibn Sho'bah ؓ said, “On the first day I came to know the Messenger of Allah ؐ, I was with Abu Jahl ibn Hishaam in one of alleys of Makkah. While we were there, the Messenger of Allah ؐ met us and said to Abu Jahl,

^[1] *Tafseer At-Tabaree* (23/126), and *Ad-Durr Al-Manthoor* (7/146).

'O Abal-Hakam (i.e., Abu Jahl; he was known as Abal-Hakam prior to the advent of Islam), come to Allah ﷻ and to His Messenger. Indeed, I invite you unto Allah.' Abu Jahl said, 'O Muhammad, are you done cursing our gods? Is the only thing you want that I bear witness that you have indeed conveyed (your message)? For by Allah, even if I knew that what you say is the truth, I would still not follow you!' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left, and Abu Jahl then approached me and said, 'By Allah, I indeed know that what he says is true, but Banu Qusai (the subtribe of the Prophet ﷺ) said: The *Hijaabah* (covering the Ka'bah) is our (honour and duty). And we said: Yes. They said: The *An-Nadwah* (the house of council for the Quraish) is with us. And we said: Yes. They said: *Al-Liwaa* (the banner of war) is with us. And we said: Yes. They said: *As-Siqayah* (providing drink to the pilgrims) is with us. And we said: Yes. Then they fed (pilgrims), and we fed (pilgrims), until they say: A Prophet is among us. Then no, by Allah, I will not do so (i.e., I will not concede this to them).''^[1]

5) A strong desire on the part of the Quraish to maintain their status and influence among Arabs

The Quraish wanted to maintain the lofty status they held among Arabs, and they wanted Makkah to remain a holy place among Arab tribes. They thought that Islam would take away the superiority they enjoyed, and they felt that if Islam reigned supreme in Makkah, other Arab tribes would attack Makkah, or at least prevent trade and merchandise from reaching Makkah's marketplace. With all of their calculations and planning, the Quraish forgot that it was Allah ﷻ Who blessed them with safety and sustenance. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَالُوا إِن نَّبَعِ الْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ نَخْطِفُ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِ الْأَوَّلِ ثُمَّ يَنْتَقِلُونَ إِلَيْهِمْ حَرَمًا

^[1] Al-Baihaque, "Dalaail An-Nubuwwah"; chapter, "The Polytheists of The Quraish Acknowledge the Miracle of Allah's Book. (2/207).

ءَامِنًا يُجِئُ إِلَىٰ نَمَرَتْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رِّزْقًا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

“And they say: “If we follow the guidance with you, we would be snatched away from our land.” Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary (Makkah), to which are brought fruits of all kinds, – a provision from Ourselves, but most of them know not.” (Qur’an 28: 57)

The Quraish thought that if the Arabs – who glorified idols – found out that the Quraish embraced a new religion, they would severely punish them for doing so; but little did they appreciate that Allah ﷻ has complete control and power over all things. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا وَيُنْخَظَفُ النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ أَفِئَابُطِلٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ يَكْفُرُونَ﴾ ﴿٦٧﴾

“Have they not seen that We have made (Makkah) a sanctuary secure, and that men are being snatched away from all around them? Then do they believe in Batil (falsehood – polytheism, idols and all deities other than Allah), and deny (become ingrate for) the Graces of Allah?” (Qur’an 29: 67)

And Allah ﷻ said in another Chapter of the Qur’an:

﴿وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْمَنْصُورُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَإِنَّ جُنَدَنَا لَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ﴾ ﴿٧٣﴾

“And verily, Our Word has gone forth of old for Our slaves, – the Messengers. That they verily would be made triumphant. And that Our hosts, they verily would be the victors.” (Qur’an 37: 171-173)

2

Trials And Tribulations

That life is a test and that the faith of people will be tested, through trials are facts that we are reminded of repeatedly in the Noble Qur'an. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ (١٦٥)

"And it is He Who has made you generations coming after generations, replacing each other on the earth. And He has raised you in ranks, some above others that He may try you in that which He has bestowed on you. Surely your Lord is Swift in retribution, and certainly He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."
(Qur'an 6: 165)

And Allah ﷻ said elsewhere in the Qur'an:

﴿إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لِّهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا﴾ (٧)

"Verily! We have made that which is on earth as an adoration for it, in order that We may test them (mankind) – as to which of them are best in deeds. [i.e., those who do good deeds in the most perfect manner, that means to do them (deeds) totally for Allah's sake and in accordance to the legal ways of the Prophet ﷺ]."
(Qur'an 18: 7)

And Allah ﷻ said in yet another Verse:

﴿إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ۝٢﴾

“Verily, We have created man from Nutfah drops of mixed semen (discharge of man and woman), in order to try him, so We made him hearer, seer.” (Qur’an 76: 2)

Success and trials are inextricably linked. No nation can prosper until it passes through various stages of trials and tests. Allah ﷻ tested the believers through various trials in order to examine their faith; it was only after those trials that they were granted stability and strength on earth. Imam Ash-Shaafai’ee – may Allah have mercy on him – expressed a similar meaning when he was once asked, “What is better for a person: For him to be granted stability and prosperity, or for him to be tested through affliction?” He answered, “One is not granted stability and prosperity until he is tested through affliction. For indeed, Allah ﷻ tested Nooh, Ibraaheem, Moosa, ‘Eesa ﷺ, and Muhammad ﷺ. It was after they showed patience that Allah ﷻ granted them stability and prosperity, so in no way should anyone think that he can altogether be saved from pain.” It must be remembered, however, that the trials that believers in particular are afflicted with are merciful and not punitive in nature. They are not merely being tested, as opposed to disbelievers; rather, they are also being chosen for good things to come. Trials and affliction, if patiently dealt with, lead to Paradise, for the Prophet ﷺ informed us that, “Paradise is surrounded by disliked things (i.e., matters that one does not like, that require effort, etc.), and the Hellfire is surrounded by desires.”^[1]

The Wisdom Behind And The Benefits Of Affliction

The wisdom behind and the benefits of trials and affliction are many; here are the most important ones:

1) Purifying the ranks of believers: Through affliction, the true

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Paradise.” *Hadeeth* number: 2922. Bukhaaree related it as well (6487).

believer is distinguished from the lying hypocrite, for the real character of a person often becomes clear not during times of ease, but during times of hardship. Consider, for instance, how the hypocrites, complaining about harsh circumstances, remained behind from the Tabook expedition. And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ﴾ (٢)

*"Do people think that they will be left alone because they say :
"We believe," and will not be tested."* (Qur'an 29: 2)

- 2) Laying bare the inner realities of people's souls: Sayyid Qutub, may Allah have mercy on him, clarified this point when he said, "Allah ﷻ knows the realities of people's hearts before He tests them; His tests, therefore, make plain to the outer world what is already plain and clear to Allah ﷻ. And so people are held accountable for the actions they carry out, and not merely for what Allah ﷻ knows about them. This is a blessing from Allah ﷻ on the one hand, and pure justice on the other."^[1]
- 3) Preparing believers for higher levels of piety and obedience: It is as if hardships melt the good soul and, in the process, rid it of impurities. At the same time, hardships encourage one to dig down deep for hidden strength and resolve, which one would not otherwise have done.
- 4) Allowing believers to become better acquainted with their inner selves: One should always know where one stands, in terms of both one's weaknesses and strengths; and through hardship one gains that knowledge, thus becoming better able to improve one's character and to fend off future attacks from *Shaitaan*.
- 5) Providing believers with a means of propagating the message of Islam: The patience of a believer in times of hardship and distress is a silent form of *Da'wah*. Illustrating this point are the

^[1] *Fee Dhilaal Al-Qur'an* (2/180).

examples of individuals from foreign tribes who went to the Prophet ﷺ and embraced Islam. When this occurred, the Prophet ﷺ sometimes instructed the individual to go back to his people and invite them to Islam. He would then return to his people and patiently endure their disbelief and harm, yet he ﷺ would patiently continue upon his course until, sooner or later, he returned to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ – except this time, with the members of his tribe, all of whom were coming as new Muslims. We will – *In Sha Allah* – come across particular examples of this later on in the book.

- 6) Encouraging strong souls to embrace Islam: When they witness the forbearance and many sacrifices of the Muslims, certain people with strong souls – who usually represent the small minority – become attracted to the religion that breeds such wonderful qualities.
- 7) Raising one's ranking with Allah ﷻ, and atoning for sins: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Whenever the believer is afflicted with (the pricking of) a thorn or anything greater than that (i.e., in terms of harm), because of it Allah ﷻ raises him one ranking or removes from him one sin."^[1] A person might have a ranking with Allah ﷻ that he couldn't have achieved through his deeds, and so Allah ﷻ tests him with an affliction and raises him to that ranking. The aforementioned *Hadeeth* also makes it clear that affliction is one of the ways through which sins are atoned for.

Other than what I mentioned above, there are many other benefits of going through trials and afflictions, some of which I will list here:

- ◆ By experiencing affliction, one gains an appreciation of Allah's Greatness and Power, and one's own weakness and subservience.

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Piety and Joining Ties of Relation (with Relatives)"; chapter, "The Reward a Believer Receives when he Becomes Sick." *Hadeeth* number: 2572.

- ◆ One is prompted to invoke Allah ﷻ more so during times of hardship than during times of ease and comfort.
- ◆ By experiencing hardship, one gains an appreciation for those times when all is well.

For a more detailed discussion of the wisdom behind and the benefits of affliction, one should refer to the book, *Fiqh Al-Ibtilah* by Muhammad Abu Sa'leeq.

Especially, but not exclusively, during the Makkan period of the Prophet's biography the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ experienced many trials and hardships - such as when the polytheists distorted the message of Islam; when they physically attacked the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ; when, during the *Hajj* season, they tried to discredit the Prophet ﷺ, for example, by calling him a soothsayer and a poet; when they enacted a comprehensive embargo against the Muslims; and so on. In the following section, I will - *In Sha Allah* - discuss some of the ways in which the polytheists waged war against Islam.

Some Of The Ways In Which The Polytheists Waged War Against Islam

If the polytheists among the Quraish were not united upon certain issues, they were certainly united upon the goal of suppressing the message of Islam, which completely uprooted their way of life, disparaging their gods and their way of thinking. They made many attempts to stop the message of Islam from spreading, or at least to limit the scope of its spreading. In what follows, I will discuss some of those attempts:

The Quraish made frequent attempts to dissuade Abu Taalib from helping and protecting the Messenger of Allah ﷺ

Once, the Quraish went to Abu Taalib and said, "Verily, your nephew has offended us both in our places of gathering and in our *Masjid*, so prevent him from continuing to do so." Abu Taalib then said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, "Verily, these cousins of yours claim that you are offending them in their *Masjid* and places of gathering, so desist from harming them." According to one account, the Prophet ﷺ then raised his gaze and said, "Do you see this sun?" They said, "Yes." According to one narration, he ﷺ then said, "By Allah, I am not more able to abandon what I have been sent with than for someone to (reach up and) light a torch of fire from this sun." Abu Taalib then said, "By Allah, my nephew

has never lied," after which he said to the leaders of the polytheists, "So return (from whence you came) in a sensible manner."^[1] The Quraish made many attempts to put pressure on the Messenger of Allah ﷺ through his family, but their efforts of course ended in failure.

The leaders of the Quraish became desperate when they realized that Abu Taalib, despite their many entreaties, was standing firmly beside his nephew. Particularly baffling and annoying to the Quraish was the fact that Abu Taalib was their coreligionist and showed no signs of wanting to embrace Islam. Desperation on their part led to an attempt that was at once insidious and pathetic. They went to Abu Taalib with 'Umaarah ibn Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, who was young, handsome, and of noble lineage. They said, "O Abu Taalib, here is 'Umaarah ibn Al-Waleed, strongest among Quraish's youth and handsomest. Take him and you will have his 'Aql (blood money if he is killed) and his help and support. Take him as a son, for he is yours. And (in return) surrender to us your nephew, who has opposed your religion and the religion of your fathers; has divided your people; and has disparaged our wise ones (or our views and opinions). Then we will kill him; in the end, it is nothing more than a man for a man." Abu Taalib answered, "By Allah, evil indeed is the trade you offer me! Shall you give me your son, whom I will nourish, while I give you my son, whom you will kill? This, by Allah, shall never happen!"^[2]

The magnanimous way in which Abu Taalib treated the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is truly amazing; he selflessly linked his fate with the fate of his nephew, Muhammad ﷺ; and he was in an ideal position to do so, for he was the leader and most influential member of the Banu Haashim clan, and was thus able to unite the children of Haashim and Al-Muttalib. He united them together – both the Muslims and non-Muslims among them – to support the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He protected his nephew without doubt or limitation. The only member of his clan who refused to join his

^[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibraaheem Al-'Alee (pg. 78).

^[2] *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/48).

efforts was Abu Lahab, whose evil destination is clearly mentioned in the Noble Qur'an.

Hamzah ء, another one of the Prophet's uncles, showed a strong display of family loyalty when Abu Jahl cursed the Prophet ﷺ. Hamzah ء, showing no fear, struck Abu Jahl with his bow, causing a fracture; he then said to Abu Jahl, "Do you curse Muhammad while I am upon his religion. Return the blow (I delivered to you) if you are able to do so!" Hamzah ء said that he ء was a Muslim based on family loyalty; it was later on that day or on the following morning, after he had time to reflect on what had happened, that he ء truly decided to enter into the fold of Islam. How Hamzah ء dealt with Abu Jahl was a singular incident in the biography of the Prophet ﷺ, singular because the one he was physically protecting cursed his gods, found fault with his religion, and disparaged his views. Wars were fought against people who did those things, yet not only did Hamzah ء not harm the Prophet ﷺ, he protected him with his life.

A great deal of poetry that was composed during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ is recorded in, among other books, *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam. In one such poem, Abu Taalib praises his clan for joining in his cause and, to further strengthen their resolve, reminds them about the Prophet's superior character and ranking among them. Abu Taalib wrote another poem when he was afraid that the Arabs would unite against his clan; in it, he seeks refuge with the sanctity of Makkah and reminds the Quraish about his ranking among them; also, he announces to the Quraish that he will die before he surrenders the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to them. In another poem, he says that even if it means that rivers of blood will flow and that fighting will become intense between the clans of the Quraish, he will never stop protecting the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Taalib remained true to the Prophet ﷺ until his dying breath. Having the complete support and protection of Abu Taalib, the Prophet ﷺ remained relatively safe from the harm of the Quraish and was able to move about freely in Makkah and openly speak the truth, without having to fear for his life.

An Attempt To Discredit The Prophet ﷺ

The leaders of the Quraish were greatly disquieted by the fact that news of Islam had spread to all parts of the Arabian Peninsula. Arab tribes came to Makkah every year for *Hajj* (pilgrimage to the Ka'bah), and during that time many among them would try to find out more about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Islam. In the minds of the Quraish, therefore, a campaign had to be launched to discredit the Prophet ﷺ in the eyes of the Arabs. The leader of that campaign was Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, who by that time was an aged chieftain of the Quraish, and leader of the Banu Makhzoom clan.

Having gathered together with a number of other chieftains and nobles, Al-Waleed said, "O people of the Quraish, the season (for *Hajj*) has arrived, and Arab delegates are coming to you. They have indeed heard about this companion of yours (i.e., Prophet Muhammad ﷺ), so let us agree to say the same thing about him; otherwise, if you say different things (about him), you will end up contradicting one another"

"O Abu 'Abd Shams (i.e., Al-Waleed)," said the attendees of this evil gathering, "Speak and inform us of what we should say, and we will say it."

"Rather, you speak, and I will listen," said Al-Waleed.

"We will say that he is a soothsayer," someone suggested. Al-Waleed demurred, saying that the Prophet ﷺ was certainly not a soothsayer. Soothsayers had certain typical characteristics, in the way they spoke barely audible, incoherent incantations, and in the way they rhymed. Al-Waleed explained that the Prophet ﷺ had none of those characteristics and that he in fact did not resemble soothsayers in the least.

"We will say that he is mad," someone suggested. Al-Waleed again demurred, saying, "He is certainly not mad." Mad people too had certain discernible characteristics, none of which the Prophet ﷺ possessed, Al-Waleed explained.

"We will say that he is a poet," someone suggested. "A poet he is

not!" Al-Waleed said, again pointing out that the Prophet ﷺ did not resemble poets in the least. Al-Waleed was certainly not showing any scruples about lying against the Prophet ﷺ; rather, he simply wanted to come up with a plausible lie, one that would not immediately be proven as being false.

"Then we will say that he is a magician," someone suggested.

"He is not a magician," said Al-Waleed. "We have seen magicians and how they blow into things (when making spells) and how they tie knots, and he does none of those things."

"Then what should we say, O Abu 'Abd Shams?" asked those who were gathered around Al-Waleed.

"By Allah, his speech is wonderful and sweet: its root (is strong like) a date palm tree, and its branches are replete with wonderful fruits. If you say anything from what you have suggested, it will immediately be known that what you say is false. Nonetheless, the best chance you have is for you to say that he is a magician." Magicians often practiced magic to sow dissension between people – between husband and wife, father and son, brother and brother, etc. Al-Waleed chose to say that the Prophet ﷺ was a magician – knowing that he ﷺ was not a magician – because, with the advent of Islam, the Quraish had become a divided people. Many sons of Quraish's chieftains and nobles accepted Islam, and so families became divided. Al-Waleed went on to say, "Say that he is a magician who divides between a man and his father, a man and his brother, a man and his wife, a man and his clan."^[1]

Allah ﷻ then revealed the following Verses about Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah:

﴿ذَرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ۖ وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَمْدُودًا ۚ وَبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ۚ وَمَهْدَتْ لَهُ نَهْيَدًا ۚ﴾ (١١) وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَمْدُودًا ۚ وَبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ۚ (١٢) وَمَهْدَتْ لَهُ نَهْيَدًا ۚ (١٣) ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ۚ (١٤) كَلَّا ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِآيَاتِنَا عِينِدًا ۚ (١٥) سَأَرْهِقُهُمْ صَعُودًا ۚ (١٦) إِنَّهُمْ فَكَّرُوا وَقَدَّرَ ۚ (١٧) فَقِيلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۚ (١٨) ثُمَّ قِيلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۚ (١٩)

^[1] *As-Siyyar Wal-Maghaazee* by Ibn Ishaq (pgs. 150, 151), and *Tahdheeb As-Seerah* (1/64, 65).

﴿٢٠﴾ ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ﴿٢١﴾ ثُمَّ عَبَسَ وَبَسَرَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَقَالَ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَهٌ مِثِّي يُؤْتِرُ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ ﴿٢٥﴾ سَأُصْلِيهِ سَقَرَ ﴿٢٦﴾ ﴿٢٧﴾

"Leave Me Alone (to deal) with whom I created Alone (without any means, i.e., Al-Waleed bin Al-Mughirah Al-Makhzoomee)! And then granted him resources in abundance. And children to be by his side! And made life smooth and comfortable for him! After all that he desires – that I should give more; nay! Verily, he has been stubborn and opposing Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.). I shall oblige him to (climb a slippery mountain) in the Hellfire called As-Sa'ood, or to) face a severe torment! Verily, he thought and plotted. So let him be cursed! How he plotted! And once more let him be cursed, how he plotted! Then he thought; then he frowned and he looked in a bad tempered way; then he turned back and was proud; then he said: "This is nothing but magic from that of old; this is nothing but the word of a human being!" I will cast him into Hellfire." (Qur'an 74: 11-26)

It is clear from the above-mentioned story that the campaign to besmirch the character of the Prophet ﷺ was not unorganized; to the contrary, it was a well-planned and coordinated effort on the part of Quraish's chieftains. Despite the fact that they were working on a primitive level with primitive means – they spread news by word of mouth and not by means of television or the radio – the Quraish employed all of the ingredients of a modern-day media smear campaign. They even overcame the disadvantages of only being able to spread their message verbally by choosing to launch their campaign when delegates from all Arab tribes were gathering in one place, in Makkah during the *Hajj* season.

Nonetheless, the above-mentioned story also points to the wonderful character of the Prophet ﷺ and the profound effect the Qur'an has on anyone who hears it. Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah was one of the most important chieftains of the

Quraish; and despite his arrogance and haughtiness, Al-Waleed was deeply moved by the Qur'an and acknowledge its grandness when he said, "By Allah, his speech is wonderful and sweet: its root (is strong like) a date palm tree, and its branches are replete with wonderful fruits."

As much as the Quraish tried to turn people away from Islam, their efforts were in vain, for the Prophet ﷺ had a profoundly positive effect on anyone he spoke to. His awe-inspiring composure, his humbleness, and his dignity – all of these gave his audience a glimpse into the Prophet's character before he ﷺ even spoke. Then when he ﷺ did speak, he captivated his audience with his logical speech, sincere and energetic tone, and loving disposition. It was clear that he ﷺ sincerely wanted to guide humanity through revelation from Allah ﷻ. Some of the most prominent converts whose stories exemplify how the Prophet ﷺ won over the hearts of people, despite Quraish's efforts to the contrary, are Dimaad Al-Azdee ؓ, 'Amr ibn At-Tufail ؓ, Abu Dharr ؓ, and 'Amr ibn 'Abasah ؓ. Here are brief accounts of how these and other Companions ؓ embraced Islam:

1) Dimaad Al-Azdee ؓ

Despite the aforementioned story about Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, the polytheists did, at various times, accuse the Prophet ﷺ of being mad, of being a liar, of being a poet, and not just of being a magician. Dimaad Al-Azdee, who had come to Makkah as a delegate, heard the claim that the Prophet ﷺ was mad. Since it was reputable chieftains of the Quraish that made the claim, and not unknown people whose veracity could not be trusted, Dimaad Al-Azdee was convinced that the Prophet ﷺ was afflicted with some form of insanity. Dimaad was particularly interested in the Prophet's case because he himself was a medical practitioner who treated mentally sick patients. When he heard some people from Makkah say, "Muhammad is indeed mad," he said to himself, "Would that I saw this man, for Allah will perhaps cure him at my hands."

Dimaad did end up meeting the Prophet ﷺ, and he began by telling the Prophet ﷺ that he treated insane people and that, with the permission of Allah ﷻ, he had had some success with his patients. After Dimaad openly offered his services, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Indeed, all praise is for Allah; we praise him and seek His help. Verily, He whom Allah guides none can misguide; and he whom Allah leads astray none can guide. And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, and He has no partner, and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger."

Dimaad said, "Repeat these words of yours to me," upon which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ repeated what he had said three times. Very much amazed, Dimaad said, "I have indeed heard the speech of soothsayers, magicians, and poets, yet I have not heard anything that is similar to these words of yours. They reach the deepest depths of the sea (i.e., they are very profound and meaningful)." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then asked him to extend his hand and pledge allegiance upon Islam, and Dimaad ؓ did so. Next, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "And upon your people (i.e., you make the same pledge for your people: that you will invite them to Islam)." Dimaad answered, "And upon my people."

After the country of Islam was established in Al-Madeenah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would send various military units on missions, some to gain information and some to engage in battle. On one such mission, the Prophet's Companions ؓ passed by Dimaad's tribe. The leader of the mission asked those under his command, "Did you gain anything from these people (i.e., in terms of war booty)?" "Yes," said one of them, "I gained from them a container that is used for purification." The leader of the mission said, "Return it, for these are the people of Dimaad."^[1]

Some of the Lessons and Morals of this story

1) Sometimes when non-Muslims attempt to harm or discredit

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Al-Jumu'ah"; chapter, "Shortening the Prayer and the Khutbah." *Hadeeth* number: 868.

Muslims, they end up unwittingly helping Muslims; people plan, but Allah ﷻ is the best of planners. Regarding the story in question, the Quraish tried to malign the Prophet's character by accusing him of being mad, their intention being to prevent people from learning more about Islam. It was their very lies that prompted Dimaad ؓ to search out for the Prophet ﷺ, in order to treat him. Hence the slander campaign of the Quraish was one of the reasons why Dimaad ؓ and his people embraced Islam.

- 2) One who invites others to Islam must be patient and forbearing; the Prophet ﷺ displayed both of these characteristics during his initial meeting with Dimaad ؓ. For Dimaad ؓ introduced himself by saying that he wanted to treat the Prophet ﷺ for the condition of insanity, which would have aroused the anger of most people, had they been in a similar situation. Yet the Prophet ﷺ answered Dimaad ؓ with forbearance and composure, and as a result, Dimaad ؓ was amazed and showed complete respect to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.
- 3) The words the Prophet ﷺ spoke to Dimaad ؓ are of special significance in Islam; he ﷺ would often begin his sermons with them. One of the reasons why those words are of special significance is that they are, despite being little in number, comprehensive of important meanings: Glorification of Allah ﷻ, praise of Allah ﷻ, Islamic Monotheism, etc.
- 4) Two important qualities of the *Daa'ee* (one who invites others to Islam) are eloquence and sincerity. Because the Prophet's speech was eloquent and flowed from a heart that was filled with *Eemaan*, certainty, wisdom, and sincerity, what he said would both reach and attract the hearts of his audience.
- 5) Dimaad's story is one of many examples that show how Islam is the religion of *Fitrah* – that is, human beings who are free from inward and outward pressures and negative influences inherently accept it. So if a person is free from such pressures and influences, and is also open-minded, he is likely to be

attracted to Islam if it is properly presented to him, which is why Muslims need to work very hard to present Islam in a good and clear manner.

- 6) The story of Dimaad ؓ illustrates the importance of performing *Da'wah*, for the Prophet ﷺ took a pledge from Dimaad ؓ to apply the teachings of Islam himself and to invite his people to become Muslims.

2) 'Amr ibn 'Abasah ؓ

Here, as related in *Saheeh Muslim*, is 'Amr ibn 'Abasah's story in his own words: "During the days of ignorance (i.e., pre-Islamic days), I would think that people were upon misguidance and that, since they worshipped idols, they were upon nothing (that is correct). Then I heard about a man in Makkah, who was informing (people) about much (significant) news. I sat on my mount and went to him. At the time the Messenger of Allah's people were brazen and insolent in their dealings with him, and so I proceeded gently until I entered upon him Makkah. (Upon meeting the Messenger of Allah ﷺ,) I said, 'Who are you?' He said, 'I am a Prophet.' I asked, 'And what is a Prophet?' He said, 'Allah has sent me.' I asked, 'With what (message) did He send you?' He ﷺ said, 'He sent me with (the message of) joining ties of relation, breaking idols, and believing in the Oneness of Allah ﷻ (worshipping Him alone), without associating any (partner) with Him.' I asked him, 'And who is with you upon this (message)?' He said, 'The free one and the slave.' Among those who followed him at that time were Abu Bakr and Bilaal ؓ (hence the reference to the free one and the slave). I said, 'Indeed, I will follow you (here).' He ﷺ said, 'Indeed, you are not able to do that on this day of yours. Do you not see my situation and the situation of the people? Instead, return to your family, and then come to me when you hear that I have *Dhahart* (i.e., when I have overcome the obstacles I face now; a clear reference to when the Prophet ﷺ was going to migrate to Al-Madeenah).' I went to my family, and (later on) the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Al-

Madeenah while I was still among my family. After he arrived in Al-Madeenah, I began to ask people (for information) and to seek out news (about the Prophet ﷺ). I continued to do so until a group of people from the dwellers of Yathrib – from the dwellers of Al-Madeenah – came (to us). I asked (them), ‘This man who has arrived in Al-Madeenah: What has he done (i.e., what news of him)?’ They said, ‘People are hurrying to (follow) him. His people did indeed want to kill him but were unable to do so.’ I went to Al-Madeenah, entered upon him, and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, do you know me?’ He ﷺ said, ‘Yes, you are the one who met me in Makkah.’”

We will suffice with this part of his story, though the narration does continue; among the things that are explained in the latter part of the narration is how ‘Amr ؓ asked the Prophet ﷺ about prayer and ablution.^[1]

Morals and Lessons

- 1) As in the case of Dimaad Al-Azdee ؓ, ‘Amr ibn ‘Abasah’s acceptance of Islam is partly credited to the unwitting help of Quraish’s leaders, for it was through their campaign to malign the Prophet ﷺ that ‘Amr ؓ first heard about Islam.
- 2) Prior to the advent of Islam, there were some people who shunned the worship of idols and worshipped Allah ﷻ alone, without associating any partner with Him; these people were known as the *Hunafaa*. The *Hunafaa* had no divinely revealed set of laws to follow, since the teachings of divinely revealed Books had become distorted. And so they worshipped Allah ﷻ in the manner that seemed best to them. And the above-mentioned story clearly indicates that ‘Amr ؓ was one of the *Hunafaa*.
- 3) The Prophet’s *Da’wah* is based upon two important principles: the right of Allah ﷻ, and the right of created beings. The

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Prayer for Travelers”; chapter, “The Islam of ‘Amr ibn ‘Abasah ؓ.” *Hadeeth* number: 832.

Prophet ﷺ made this clear when he ﷺ said to 'Amr ؓ, "He ﷺ sent me with (the message of) joining ties of relation, breaking idols, and believing in the Oneness of Allah ﷻ (worshipping Him alone), without associating any (partner) with Him." That the Prophet ﷺ practically defined Islam with these words and juxtaposed *Tawheed* with joining ties of relation proves the importance of establishing good relations with one's relatives.

- 4) It was at a very early stage of his *Da'wah* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Breaking idols," a stage during which he ﷺ wasn't actually able to break the idols of the Quraish. This proves that, just because Muslims are not able at a given time to apply a particular Islamic practice, there is no excuse to hide or avoid teaching Muslims about that practice. A person's *Dawah* is deficient if he invites people to apply only those teachings of Islam that are easily applied, while avoiding the mention of those teachings that, in order to apply them, require struggle and effort on the part of Muslims.
- 5) The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did his utmost to keep his Companions ؓ safe, which is why he ﷺ told 'Amr ؓ to wait for the right time to come back to him and to meanwhile go back to his people.
- 6) Showing the qualities of true leadership, the Prophet ﷺ would remember his Companions ؓ and the times he met them. 'Amr ؓ would perhaps have not felt as assured and welcomed had not the Prophet ﷺ said, "You are the one who met me in Makkah."
- 7) When the Muslims were few in number and the Prophet's *Da'wah* was in its incipient stages, the Prophet ﷺ would not give every new Muslim a complete list of his followers, for doing so would not have really benefited anyone. And so when 'Amr ibn 'Abasah ؓ asked the Prophet ﷺ who his followers were, the Prophet ﷺ said, "The free and the slave," or in Arabic, *Hurr* and *'Abd*. Ibn Katheer pointed out that this

was a play on words and that, at the time, 'Amr ؓ probably thought that *Hurr* and *'Abd* were the actual names of two people. Some Muslims did not openly announce their faith, and so divulging news about their acceptance of Islam would quite probably have exposed them to danger.

- 8) For many reasons – for example, to protect Muslims from harm, to prepare for the future, to prevent all Muslims from being killed at once, etc. – it is not wise to keep Muslims in one place when they are being oppressed and persecuted, which is why the Prophet ﷺ said to 'Amr ibn 'Abasah ؓ, "Return to your family." And as we shall soon see, other instances of this occurred when the Prophet ﷺ twice permitted Muslims to migrate to Abyssinia.

3) At-Tufail ibn 'Amr Ad-Dausee ؓ

At-Tufail also first learned about the Prophet ﷺ from those who were trying to discredit him. His story is related in great detail in books of *Seerah*; however, Dr. Akram Diyaa Al-'Umree maintains that the only part of the story that is substantiated is the part which says that At-Tufail ؓ invited the Prophet ﷺ to take refuge in the fortress of the Daus tribe and that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ refused his offer.^[1] And according to an authentic narration, At-Tufail ؓ invited his people to Islam. After they opposed him, he ؓ asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to supplicate against them, but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ instead invoked Allah ﷻ to guide them.^[2] By the time that this occurred, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had already migrated to Al-Madeenah Al-Munawwarah.^[3]

4) Al-Husain ؓ (father of 'Imraan ibn Husain ؓ)

The leaders of the Quraish revered Al-Husain ؓ for his wisdom

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Faith." *Hadeeth* number: 116.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (2937), and *Saheeh Muslim* (2524).

^[3] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Katheer (2/76), and refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah As-Saheehah* by Dr. Al-'Umree (1/146).

and intelligence. Because of these qualities, and because some members of the Quraish thought that an outsider might succeed where they had failed, Quraish's leaders approached Al-Husain and said to him, "Speak to this man on our behalf, for indeed, he speaks (badly) of our gods and curses them." They accompanied him until they reached the Prophet's house; they waited outside, while Al-Husain and other members of his tribe entered. Al-Husain said, "What is this that has reached us about you: You speak about our gods and curse them? Your father was indeed good and wise (for having adhered to the religion of his fathers)." The Prophet ﷺ said, "O Husain, indeed my father and your father are in the Hellfire. O Husain, how many gods do you worship?" Al-Husain said, "Seven on earth and one in the heavens." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "And when you are afflicted with harm, whom do you invoke?" Al-Husain said, "The One that is in the heavens." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "And when (your) wealth is wiped out, whom do you invoke?" He said, "The One that is in the heavens." The Prophet ﷺ said, "He alone answers you, yet you make them His partners!" Later on in their discussion, the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "O Husain, submit (i.e., embrace Islam) and you will have achieved safety." Al-Husain said, "Verily I have my people and my clan, then what should I say?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Say: 'O Allah, guide me, so that my affair becomes good, and increase me in knowledge that benefits me.'" Al-Husain ﷺ repeated those words, and he ﷺ didn't stand up from their meeting until he ﷺ first embraced Islam. Al-Husain's son, 'Umraan ﷺ stood up, went to his father and kissed his head, his hands, and his feet. When the Prophet ﷺ saw him doing that, he ﷺ began to cry. He ﷺ said, "I cried because of what 'Umraan ﷺ did: When Al-Husain entered here, he was a disbeliever, and 'Umraan neither stood up for him nor turned in his direction; then when Al-Husain embraced Islam, 'Umraan ﷺ fulfilled his (father's) right (over him). A feeling of warmth and mercy entered me because of that." When Al-Husain ﷺ wanted to leave, the Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions ﷺ, "Stand and escort him to his home." The leaders of the Quraish, who had been waiting

all along for Al-Husain ﷺ to come out to them – hoping for some good news – now saw him coming out, surrounded by Muslims. “He has changed his religion!” exclaimed Quraish’s leaders, after which they departed in anger.^[1] Al-Husain ﷺ was helped into embracing Islam so quickly by the soundness of his inherent nature on the one hand, and the power and logic of the Prophet’s words on the other hand.

5) Abu Dharr ؓ

Even before the advent of Islam, Abu Dharr ؓ refused to worship idols, and would reproach those who did. Three years before the Prophet ﷺ received revelation for the first time, Abu Dharr ؓ began to pray to Allah ﷻ; however, not having a *Shariah* (set of laws) to follow, he didn’t pray in any particular direction. Therefore like ‘Amr ibn ‘Abasah ؓ, Abu Dharr Al-Ghafaaree ؓ was one of the *Hunafaa* – those who, prior to the advent of Islam, worshipped Allah ﷻ alone, without associating any partner with Him.

It is therefore not surprising that Abu Dharr ؓ became excited when he heard that a man in Makkah announced that he was a Messenger from Allah ﷻ. Abu Dharr ؓ was not himself from Makkah; he belonged to the Ghafaar tribe, which was situated north of Makkah, along the road the Quraish took when their trading caravans were heading towards Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions).

Abu Dharr ؓ sent his brother to Makkah, instructing him to learn more about the Prophet ﷺ and to hear what he had to say. Abu Dharr’s brother did what was asked of him, and when he returned back home, he informed Abu Dharr ؓ about what he had learned: “I saw him ordering (people) to adopt the noblest of manners. And his speech (was beautiful), though it certainly was not poetry.”

“You have not quenched my thirst (i.e., I have to go and learn

^[1] *Al-Isaabah Fee Tamyeez As-Sahaabah* by Ibn Hajar (1/337).

more about him myself),”^[1] said Abu Dharr ؓ. Having seen the tense situation in Makkah, and how the polytheists were persecuting the Muslims there, Abu Dharr’s brother cautioned, “Be very wary of Makkah’s inhabitants, for they hate him and look upon him with frowns (or they speak rudely with him).”^[2]

Abu Dharr ؓ then traveled to Makkah, but when he arrived there, he didn’t ask about the Prophet ﷺ. The situation in Makkah was indeed tense, and so Abu Dharr ؓ simply remained beside the Ka’bah until nightfall, at which time he lay down to rest. ‘Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ saw him and, knowing that he was a stranger, offered to put him up for the night. That night, ‘Alee ؓ didn’t ask Abu Dharr ؓ about the purpose of his visit to Makkah, and for his part, Abu Dharr ؓ was not forthcoming with information about himself or his purpose; there seemed to be a grave reticence between the two, with each of them sizing up the situation of the other. In the morning, ‘Alee ؓ accompanied Abu Dharr ؓ to the *Masjid*, which is where the latter stayed until nightfall. For a second night, ‘Alee ؓ kept Abu Dharr ؓ in his home as a guest; and the same happened on the third night. Then ‘Alee ؓ asked him about the purpose of his visit. Abu Dharr ؓ now felt that he could trust his generous host, and so he ؓ told him that he had come to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. ‘Alee ؓ enthusiastically responded, “He is indeed true; he is indeed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When it is morning, follow me, but if I see something which makes me afraid for you (such as a polytheist following him), I will stand as if I am pouring water. Then if I proceed, continue to follow me.” Abu Dharr ؓ followed him, and ‘Alee ؓ safely led him to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Upon hearing what the Prophet ﷺ told him, Abu Dharr ؓ embraced Islam. The Prophet ﷺ said to him, “Return to your people and inform them (about Islam), (and stay there) until my command (to do

^[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibraaheem Al-‘Alee (pg. 83).

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Virtues”; chapter, “The Virtues of Abu Dharr ؓ.” *Hadeeth* number: 2473. Also, refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah As-Saheehah* by Al-‘Umaree (1/145).

otherwise) comes to you.” Abu Dharr ؓ said, “By the One Who has my soul in His Hand, I will scream out loud with it (with news that I have embraced Islam) right in their midst (i.e., in the midst of the Quraish).” He ؓ then went to the *Masjid* and called out as loud as he could, “I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.” The people of the Quraish pounced upon him and threw him to the ground; the crowd that had gathered was poised to beat him to death, which is probably what would have happened, had not Al-’Abbaas ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib – the Prophet’s uncle – intervened. Al-’Abbaas warned the crowd that if they harmed Abu Dharr ؓ, the Ghafaar tribe would try to exact revenge.^[1] And Al-’Abbaas reminded them that the Ghafaar tribe would easily be able to get their revenge since, when heading to Ash-Sham, Quraish’s trading caravans had to pass through Ghaffaar territory. Thinking about their material welfare, the crowd came back to their senses, and Abu Dharr ؓ, having done what he had vowed to do, returned safely to his homeland.

Lessons and Morals

- 1) All of the above-mentioned stories show two important things: First, news of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had spread over most, if not all, of Arabia. And second, the Quraish more so than anyone else contributed, albeit unwittingly, to that reality. Here, as before, I am not praising the Quraish for having done something good; I am merely pointing out the fact that, very often, people try to harm Allah’s religion, but good comes out of it; in other words, evil people can plan as much as they want, but it is Allah ﷻ alone Who has full control over all that happens in the universe. Muslims should therefore not become despondent these days when some evil people try to give others a bad image of Islam; true, those with a herd mentality

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Virtues”; chapter, “The Virtues of Abu Dharr ؓ.” *Hadeeth* number: 2474. Bukhaaree related it as well (3861 and 3522).

might follow them, but there are others who will want to learn more for themselves: it is such people who then find the truth and embrace Islam, as did Abu Dharr Al-Ghafaaree ؓ centuries ago.

- 2) There is always a superior and intelligent minority that consists of individuals who do not follow the herd, but are instead capable of individual thought and of arriving at their own opinions. Abu Dharr Al-Ghafaaree ؓ was one such person: People were spreading lies against the Prophet ﷺ, yet what they said had no impact on him, for he was concerned with logical and clear proofs – and with the truth. That is why, instead of simply accepting what the Quraish were saying, he ؓ sent his brother to gather information and then went himself to learn the truth. Even today – or especially today – when the media has such a strong grip over the views that the masses hold, there are still some who refuse to believe everything they hear and, knowing that they will be chastised for doing so, dig deeper for the truth.
- 3) The seeker of the truth very often has to make sacrifices and go beyond soul searching to arrive at the truth. Abu Dharr ؓ was not satisfied with the general information that his brother Unais ؓ brought back to him; he ؓ wanted to arrive at the heart of the matter, for he wasn't gathering information about a common man, but rather about a man who said that he was a Prophet sent from Allah ﷻ. And so Abu Dharr ؓ was willing to leave the comfort of his home, the company of his family, and the familiarity of his native land – all, in order to ascertain the truth. He ؓ endured many hardships along the way, for he ؓ did not have much in terms of provisions, but it was all worth it to be able to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and embrace Islam.
- 4) In all of one's affairs, one should proceed with a purpose, but also with caution, especially if one sees signs of danger; rashness only brings harm to one's own self and, very often, to the people

one loves. This point is clearly illustrated in Abu Dharr's story. Wanting desperately to meet the Prophet ﷺ, yet knowing that the Quraish would look suspiciously upon an outsider who wanted to meet the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Dharr ؓ proceeded cautiously, waiting for the right opportunity to find out where the Prophet ﷺ was staying. Had Abu Dharr ؓ announced the purpose of his visit, the Quraish would probably have beaten him, or at least expelled him from Makkah and prevented him from realizing the very purpose of his trip. Even with 'Alee ؓ, Abu Dharr ؓ waited three days to make sure that he could trust his generous host. And when 'Alee ؓ asked him to explain the purpose of his visit, Abu Dharr ؓ agreed to do so, but only if 'Alee ؓ promised to both keep it a secret and help him realize that purpose. 'Alee ؓ then showed a similar regard for safety and caution when he ؓ told Abu Dharr ؓ that, if he saw anyone following them, he would act as if he were pouring water. Another cautionary measure they took is that Abu Dharr ؓ walked at some distance behind 'Alee ؓ, thus making it hard for any onlooker to make a link between the two of them. This shows that, even in the early stages of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, the Companions ؓ were superior planners: they ؓ always took studied and planned steps to arrive at their goals – may Allah be pleased with them all.

- 5) Yet again, we see how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was concerned with the safety and well-being of his Companions ؓ; rather than ask Abu Dharr ؓ to stay in Makkah and add to the number of his followers there, the Prophet ﷺ ordered him to go back to his people.
- 6) Although one should be cautious and not put one's life in danger unnecessarily, there are times when courageous action is called for. Abu Dharr ؓ showed great courage when he ؓ went in the midst of Quraish's gatherings and challenged them with the truth by announcing that he had embraced Islam. It was as if, when the Prophet ﷺ told him to keep his Islam a secret, Abu Dharr ؓ felt that the Prophet ﷺ was simply

looking after his well-being and not that the Prophet ﷺ was actually forbidding him from announcing his acceptance of Islam. This, in fact, is likely what had happened, for the Prophet ﷺ later showed no disapproval of what Abu Dharr ؓ had done. Abu Dharr's actions and the Prophet's tacit approval of those actions prove that one may speak the truth even if one fears being harmed as a result, although remaining silent in the face of imminent physical punishment is also permissible. The fact is that, in this regard, what is considered Islamically correct depends on both the situation and one's intentions, factors that consequently determine whether or not one will be rewarded for one's actions.^[1]

- 7) Abu Dharr's display of bravery was a mental blow to Quraish's leaders, who could not believe that someone had the temerity to hurl invective at their gods in their own city. The Quraish thought that they had stifled the voices of the believers, but here was Abu Dharr ؓ defying them not with a sword, but with a verbal announcement of the truth. Persecutors and oppressors tend to lose morale when they see determination in their victims; even after he received repeated blows and after blood began to flow from his body, Abu Dharr ؓ stood up again and announced the Testimony of Truth: I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.
- 8) Even when he wasn't a Muslim, Al-'Abbaas ؓ would try to protect the lives of Muslims. That Al-'Abbaas ؓ strove to save Abu Dharr ؓ from being beaten or killed at the hands of the Quraish indicates that he was a Muslim sympathizer. In defending Abu Dharr ؓ, Al-'Abbaas ؓ showed that he knew how to reason with the Quraish – in a sense, how to speak their language – by reminding them of the financial risks they would be taking if they seriously harmed Abu Dharr ؓ.

^[1] Refer to *Fathul-Baaree*, the explanation of *Hadeeth* number: 3861.

- 9) In spite of his enthusiasm to brave all dangers for the sake of the truth, and in spite of his love for the Prophet ﷺ and his desire to stay with him, Abu Dharr ؓ obeyed the Prophet's command and returned to his homeland. Once there, he began by inviting his family – first his brother and mother – and his fellow tribesmen to Islam.
- 10) Just because a person excels in one endeavour does not mean that he is qualified to do other things. This point is lost on many Muslims today: today, for example, one successfully invites another person to Islam, and tomorrow – without being knowledgeable – he wants to issue Islamic rulings. So true, Abu Dharr ؓ was successful in his *Da'wah* efforts; he played an important role – by the permission of Allah ﷻ – in convincing his people about the truth of Islam. That being true, Abu Dharr ؓ was not fitted for leadership roles. Imam Muslim related in his *Saheeh* that Abu Dharr ؓ once said to the Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allah, will you not employ me (i.e., will you not appoint me as leader or governor or person in charge over a group of people)?" Abu Dharr ؓ later recounted what happened next: "The Prophet ﷺ tapped his hand on my shoulder and then said, 'O Abu Dharr, you indeed are weak, and it (i.e., a position of leadership) is a trust; and on the Day of Resurrection, it (the fact of having been a leader in the world) is ignominy and regret, except for those who take it (a position of leadership) by right and fulfill the duties that come with it (i.e., with a position of leadership or authority).'"^[1] Every person should work and strive in that endeavour which Allah ﷻ has made him fitted for; or in other words, just because one succeeds in one endeavour, it does not mean that he will succeed in another. It is up to each person to assess the talents he has been blessed with in an impartial manner and then to use them to his utmost.
- 11) Abu Dharr ؓ enjoyed tremendous success in his *Da'wah*

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Leadership." *Hadeeth* number: 1825.

efforts: half of his tribe embraced Islam during a short span of time, and the other half embraced Islam after the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah.

The slander campaign of the Quraish failed; the Prophet ﷺ showed greater resolve and determination than the Quraish had ever expected. Rather than sit in the corner of the *Masjid* and keep his message a secret, the Prophet ﷺ would go out to meet Arab visitors before they actually entered Makkah, and he ﷺ would recite the Qur'an out loud in the *Masjid*, in the hope that some sincere and open-minded person would hear him. These early efforts were certainly not in vain, as is established by the conversion of Dimaad Al-Azdee ؓ, 'Amr ibn 'Abasah ؓ, Abu Dharr Al-Ghafaaree ؓ, At-Tufail ibn 'Amr Ad-Dausee ؓ, Husain (father of 'Imraan ibn Al-Husain ؓ), and others. That these outsiders embraced Islam (and that some of them then guided their people to Islam) clearly proves that the slander campaign waged by the Quraish against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a miserable failure.

The Different Ways In Which The Messenger Of Allah ﷺ Was Persecuted

From the day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced his Prophethood, and until the day he left Makkah and migrated to Al-Madeenah, the Quraish tirelessly persecuted him, taking advantage of any opportunity that arose to mistreat him – and even to physically harm him. This is why many Verses that were being revealed during that period ordered the Prophet ﷺ to be patient and forbade him from losing hope. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ١٠﴾

“And be patient (O Muhammad ﷺ) with what they say, and keep away from them in a good way.” (Qur'an 73: 10)

He ﷺ said in another Verse:

﴿فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ ءَائِمًا أَوْ كَفُورًا ۝٧٤﴾

"Therefore be patient (O Muhammad ﷺ) and submit to the Command of your Lord (Allah, by doing your duty to Him and by conveying His Message to mankind), and obey neither a sinner nor a disbeliever among them." (Qur'an 76: 24)

And He ﷻ said in yet another Verse:

﴿وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُنْ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ۝٧٥﴾

"And grieve you not for them, nor be straitened (in distress) because of what they plot." (Qur'an 27: 70)

And Allah ﷻ also said:

﴿مَا يُقَالُ لَكَ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ قِيلَ لِلرُّسُلِ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغْفِرَةٍ وَذُو عِقَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ۝٤٣﴾

"Nothing is said to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) except what was said to the Messengers before you. Verily, your Lord is the Possessor of forgiveness, and (also) the Possessor of painful punishment." (Qur'an 41: 43)

Here are some examples of how the Quraish mistreated the Prophet ﷺ:

- 1) Abu Jahl once asked other members of the Quraish, "Does Muhammad cover his face with dust (by performing prostration) right in your midst?" Someone answered, "Yes." Abu Jahl then said, "By Al-Laat and Al-'Uzza! If I see him doing that, I will indeed tread on his neck, or I will cover his face with soil." Soon thereafter, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was praying in the *Masjid*, when Abu Jahl saw him and proceeded to fulfill his pledge. But no sooner did Abu Jahl approach the Prophet ﷺ than he began to tread backwards, warding something off with his hands, but what it was that he was warding off no other member of the Quraish that was present could discern. Seeing this strange occurrence and the terrified

expression on Abu Jahl's face, someone asked him, "What is the matter with you?" Perhaps it was the terror of the moment that made Abu Jahl give an uncharacteristically honest response: "Verily, between me and him is a trench of fire, terror, and wings (the wings of angels)." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ later shed light on what had happened: "Had he come near me, the angels would have snatched him, limb by limb."^[1]

Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ related that, on another occasion, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was praying when Abu Jahl went up to him and rudely said, "Did I not forbid you from doing this! Did I not forbid you from doing this?" The Prophet ﷺ admonished him, but that only increased Abu Jahl in his haughtiness, for he answered back in a menacing tone, "You indeed know that I have the biggest council in (Makkah)!" Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ ﴿٧﴾ سَدَّعُوا الرِّبَابَةَ ﴿٨﴾﴾

"Then, let him call upon his council (of helpers). We will call the guards of Hell (to deal with him)!" (Qur'an 96: 17, 18)

At the end of the narration, Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said, "Had he called upon his council (to help him mistreat the Prophet ﷺ), Allah's angels of punishment (the guards of Hell) would have seized him."

- 2) Ibn Mas'ood ؓ narrated: "While the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was standing up, praying beside the Ka'bah, and the Quraish were together in their gatherings, one of them said, 'Will you not all look at this person who is performing for show? Which one of you will go to the *Jazoor* (a camel that is prepared for slaughter) of such and such family, take its entrails, its blood, and the remains of its womb, and bring it all here – then wait until he performs prostration, and then place it all on his back between his shoulders?' The most wretched of them left (to do this most vile deed). Then, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the book, "Description of the Resurrection, Paradise, and Hell." *Hadeeth* number: 2797.

performed prostration, he (i.e., the one who had volunteered) placed it all between his shoulders. The Prophet ﷺ remained fixed in prostration, while they laughed so uncontrollably that they began to lean (or fall) over one another. Someone went to Faatimah ؓ, who was still a child. She came hurriedly (towards the *Masjid*), and the Prophet ﷺ remained in prostration until she removed (the filth) from his (back). She ؓ then approached the congregated polytheists and cursed them. When the Prophet ﷺ had completed his prayer, he ﷺ said, 'O Allah, destroy (the infidels of) the Quraish; O Allah, destroy (the infidels of) the Quraish; O Allah, destroy (the infidels of) the Quraish.' Then he ﷺ mentioned (specific) names: 'O Allah, destroy 'Amr ibn Hishaam, 'Utbah ibn Rabee'ah, Shaibah ibn Rabee'ah, Al-Waleed ibn 'Utbah, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, 'Uqbah ibn Abee Mu'ait, and 'Umaarah ibn Al-Waleed.' By Allah, I saw them all (each of the men named above) struck dead on the Day of Badr; then they were dragged to Al-Qaleeb (an old well) – the Qaleeb of Badr. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said, 'The people of Al-Qaleeb have been followed by a curse (perhaps this refers to the realization of the Prophet's supplication against them).'"[1]

Other authentic narrations establish that the person who threw the entrails and filth of the camel onto the Prophet's back was 'Uqbah ibn Abee Mu'aid, and that the person who goaded him on to do that most despicable deed was Abu Jahl.^[2] Those narrations further indicate that the Quraish were greatly perturbed when the Prophet ﷺ supplicated against them, for they believed that supplications made in Makkah were answered.

- 3) One day, Quraish's nobility were in a gathering beside the Ka'bah, and were talking about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. One of them said, "We have never witnessed anyone showing as much patience as we have shown regarding the affair of this

[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (520), and *Saheeh Muslim* (1794).

[2] *Saheeh Muslim* (1794).

man (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ): He has disparaged our view and cursed our gods; it is a grave matter indeed regarding which we are patient with him." While this was going on, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ appeared, and they all hurried towards him with a fiery intensity. They surrounded him and said, "You are the one who says such and such (in terms of finding fault with their gods and religion)." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes, I am the one who says that." A man among them roughly took hold of his garment, at which time Abu Bakr ؓ came and stood in between the Prophet ﷺ and the gathered crowd. Abu Bakr ؓ was crying as he then said, "Will you kill a man for saying, 'My Lord is Allah?'"[1]

- 4) Perhaps no one showed as much enmity towards the Prophet ﷺ as did Abu Lahab, the Prophet's uncle, and Abu Lahab's wife, Umm Jameel. Umm Jameel would spread lies in order to sow dissension between the Prophet ﷺ and other people; she was so fixated in her hatred that she would take the time to place thorns along the paths that the Prophet ﷺ customarily treaded upon; and she would place impure filth in front of the Prophet's door. It is not surprising, therefore, that Allah ﷻ revealed an entire chapter about both Abu Lahab and Umm Jameel:

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ①
 ① مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ ②
 ② سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ ③
 ③ وَأَمْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ ④
 ④ فِي جِيدِهَا
 ⑤ حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ

"Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab (an uncle of the Prophet ﷺ), and perish he! His wealth and his children (etc.) will not benefit him! He will be burnt in a Fire of blazing flames! And his wife too, who carries wood (thorns of Sadan which she used to put on the way of the Prophet ﷺ, or use to slander him). In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad (palm fibre)." (Qur'an 111: 1-5)

[1] Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah by Ibraaheem Al-'Alee (pg. 96).

When Umm Jameel heard these Verses, she went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who at time was sitting down beside the Ka'bah, in the company of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ. With a stone in her hand, Umm Jameel stood over them and said, "O Abu Bakr, where is your companion? It has been conveyed to me that he satirizes me. By Allah, had I found him (now), I would have struck his mouth with this stone!" She then left. Bewildered by what had just happened, Abu Bakr ؓ said, "O Messenger of Allah, do you suppose that she did not see you!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, Allah prevented her from seeing me." Abu Lahab dedicated his life to fight against Islam; he would follow the Messenger of Allah ﷺ around in the marketplace, in gatherings, and during *Hajj* season in order to interrupt and harass him when he ﷺ was inviting people to embrace Islam.

These are just a few examples of how the polytheists tried to inflict harm upon the Prophet ﷺ. Their constant persecution of the Prophet ﷺ culminated with a plan to kill him, which ended in failure and in the Prophet's migration to Al-Madeenah. As for the early stages of persecution, the Prophet ﷺ was subjected to ill treatment before any of his Companions ؓ suffered any harm at the hands of the Quraish. The Prophet ﷺ said, "I was threatened (with torture or punishment) for (the cause of) Allah at a time when no one else was threatened. And I was harmed for [the cause of (i.e., Islam)] Allah at a time when no one else was being harmed. And there came a time for me when thirty days and nights passed by while Bilaal and I had no food that a living creature (could) eat except for an amount that (could be) hidden in the armpit of Bilaal (i.e., Bilaal was my companion at the time, and we had very little food for many days - so little that it could be carried under the arm of Bilaal)."^[1]

Verbal abuse was a common occurrence: when the Prophet ﷺ would pass by gatherings of the Quraish, they would mock him, saying, "Here is the son of Abu Kabshah; he is spoken to from the

^[1] *Sunan At-Tirmidhee* (4/645), and *Al-Albaanee*, may Allah have mercy on him, declared it to be authentic in *Saheeh Al-Jaamai'*. Number: 5001.

heavens!” And one of them would pass by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and say in a mocking tone, “Have you not been spoken to from the heavens today!”

Quraish’s nobility did not stop at verbal abuse; whenever the opportunity arose, they even physically harmed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. For example, Umayyah ibn Khalaf once spit on the face of the Prophet ﷺ. And the ill treatment and persecution continued even after the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah, although in some regards things did of course improve. Whereas Quraish’s polytheists were practically the only enemies of the Prophet ﷺ while he lived in Makkah, more people became his enemies once he ﷺ moved to Al-Madeenah – such as the hypocrites who lived alongside the Muslims, neighbouring Jewish tribes, the people of Persia, Rome, and their allies. In Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ was subjected to curses, mockery, and physical abuse – but without the use of weapons. In Al-Madeenah, the situation worsened in the sense that armies began to attack him and his followers. So in fact, the entire duration of his Prophethood consisted of a constant chain of tests and trials; nonetheless, the Prophet ﷺ never tired or lost hope; rather, he remained patient and expected his reward from Allah ﷻ.

One cannot even imagine how much hardship the Prophet ﷺ had to endure through the latter part of his life. The harm he endured was proportionate to the significance of the message he ﷺ came with and to the great honours that will be bestowed upon him on the Day of Resurrection – such as ‘The Station of Praise’ and a high ranking with his Lord. Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudree ؓ reported that he ؓ once asked the Prophet ﷺ, “O Messenger of Allah, who among people is most severely tested?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Prophets, then the next best group of people, and then the next best group of people. A man is tested in proportion to his religion: if there is firmness in his religion (i.e., if he is a strong believer), then his test will become severe. And if there is softness in his religion (i.e., if he is a weak believer, one who does not firmly and consistently follow the teachings of Islam), then he will be tested

in proportion to his religion (i.e., in proportion to his application of Islam's teachings). The slave (of Allah) will constantly be accompanied by affliction, until he is left to walk on the earth, without there being any wrongdoing held against him (this is because hardships and affliction are atonement for one's sins)."^[1]

Some Of The Ways In Which The Prophet's Companions ﷺ Were Persecuted

1) Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ﷺ

True, weak Companions ﷺ and slaves were most susceptible to attacks at the hands of the Quraish, but even Muslims from the upper classes of Makkah were not saved from one form of persecution or another. In fact, on one occasion, Abu Bakr ﷺ was beaten so badly that he almost died as a result.

When there were only 39 male Muslims, Abu Bakr ﷺ urged the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to openly preach the message of Islam, but the Prophet ﷺ responded by saying, "O Abu Bakr, we are (as of yet) few in number." Abu Bakr ﷺ continued to urge the Prophet ﷺ to openly preach until, one day, the Muslims spread out in different parts of the *Masjid*, with each man remaining in the midst of his clan. Abu Bakr ﷺ then stood up to deliver a sermon, while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ remained seated. On that day, Abu Bakr ﷺ became the first person (from this nation) to deliver a sermon in which he invited people unto Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. The polytheists did not idly listen to his sermon; instead, they became enraged and charged towards Abu Bakr ﷺ and the other Muslims. In various parts of the *Masjid*, the Quraish were giving a severe beating to the Muslims. Abu Bakr ﷺ was both trampled upon and beaten severely; using his shoes, the evildoer 'Utbah ibn Rabee'ah began to viciously strike Abu Bakr ﷺ on his face. So severely was Abu Bakr ﷺ beaten, and so much

^[1] *Ibn Maaajah* (4023). And in *Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maaajah*, Al-Albaanee said, "*Hasan Saheeh* (4095)."

blood flowed down his face, that it became difficult to discern between his face and the back of his head.

Had the beating continued, Abu Bakr ﷺ might have died; in fact, even as matters stood, he ﷺ did almost die. But his fellow clansmen from Banu Taim came, although somewhat belatedly, to defend him. They pushed the attacking mob away and carried Abu Bakr ﷺ to his home, feeling certain that he ﷺ had died. Members of the Banu Taim clan then returned to the *Masjid* and proclaimed, "By Allah, if Abu Bakr dies, we will indeed kill 'Utba ibn Rabe'e'ah." They then returned to Abu Bakr ﷺ, and Abu Quhaafah - Abu Bakr's father - as well as other members of Banu Tameem tried to speak to him until he finally revived at the end of the day and spoke to them. But rather than answer their questions, and rather than worry about his own condition, Abu Bakr ﷺ asked them how the Prophet ﷺ was doing. Since they were not Muslims, and since they cared about Abu Bakr's welfare particularly because he was from their clan - as opposed to the Prophet ﷺ - they were rather upset by what Abu Bakr ﷺ had said, and they reproached him, reminding him that he should be worried about staying alive, for though he had regained consciousness, he was still extremely weak and bruised from the beating he had taken. His fellow clansmen urged his mother, Umm Al-Khair, to give him food and drink. And when the two of them were then left alone together, Umm Al-Khair implored Abu Bakr ﷺ to partake of some nourishment, but Abu Bakr ﷺ kept asking about the Prophet ﷺ. It wasn't surprising that no one from Banu Taim knew how the Prophet ﷺ was doing, since it was hard to make out what had happened during the chaotic violence that had just taken place, and since the Prophet ﷺ was, like Abu Bakr ﷺ, being taken care of by his fellow clansmen, the men of Banu Haashim.

"By Allah, I have no knowledge of your companion (i.e., of how he is doing now)," said Umm Al-Khair. Abu Bakr ﷺ said, "Go to Umm Jameel ﷺ, daughter of Al-Khattaab (and brother of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ﷺ), and ask her about him."

Umm Al-Khair likely had a sense of how Abu Bakr ﷺ valued the Prophet's life more so than his own, and so she acquiesced and went out in search of Umm Jameel ﷺ. Upon finding her, Umm Al-Khair said, "Verily, Abu Bakr asks you about (how) Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ﷺ (is doing)."

Umm Jameel ﷺ said, "I know neither Abu Bakr nor Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, but if you want, I will go with you to your son." Umm Al-Khair said, "Yes," and the two of them returned to Abu Bakr ﷺ. They found him to be seriously ill, and they suspected that he was on the verge of dying. Seeing Abu Bakr's weak condition, Umm Jameel ﷺ approached him and yelled out loud, saying, "By Allah, those who have done this to you are indeed the people of wickedness and disbelief. Indeed, I hope that Allah takes revenge on them for you." Abu Bakr ﷺ then asked how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was doing, to which Umm Jameel ﷺ responded, "Here is your mother, listening (to us)." Abu Bakr ﷺ reassured her that she ﷺ had nothing to worry about regarding his mother.

"He is safe and sound," said Umm Jameel ﷺ. Abu Bakr ﷺ asked, "Where is he?" She answered, "In the House of Al-Arqam." Despite his own weakness and need for rest and nourishment, Abu Bakr ﷺ then made an oath that he would neither eat nor drink before first going to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and making sure that he was well. But both Umm Jameel ﷺ and Umm Al-Khair delayed him, for they thought it was best to wait for the situation to calm down in the streets. When things did finally calm down, they led Abu Bakr ﷺ to the House of Al-Arqam, and since he ﷺ couldn't walk on his own, he was leaning on them for support. As soon as they entered, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ hurried towards Abu Bakr ﷺ and kissed him; the other Muslims that were there also hurried to meet Abu Bakr ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was greatly moved by Abu Bakr's condition. Knowing that the Prophet ﷺ was worried about him, Abu Bakr ﷺ said, "May my mother and father be held ransom for you, O Messenger of Allah. The only hurt I feel is a result of the blows that *Al-Faasiq*

(the evildoer, i.e., 'Utbah ibn Rabee'ah) delivered to my face. And here (with me) is my mother, who is faithful to her son. And you are blessed, so invite her unto Allah, and supplicate to Allah for her, for perhaps, through you, Allah will save her from the Hellfire.'" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ supplicated for her and invited her unto Allah ﷻ, and she ﷻ responded to his invitation by embracing Islam.^[1]

Lessons and Morals

- 1) These days, one might hesitate to propagate Islam to non-Muslims, fearing mockery and insults. Abu Bakr ؓ probably knew that beyond mere verbal insults, he would be subjected to a physical attack. Yet he ؓ was courageous enough to overlook that outcome, considering it of utmost importance to openly preach Islam to non-Muslims. Some people ask themselves what it was that made Muslims so successful in spreading Islam during the Prophet's lifetime; the answer is not beyond our grasp when we reflect on Abu Bakr's sacrifice – his own subtribe thought that he ؓ had died from the beating – and the many sacrifices he ؓ and other Companions ؓ made throughout their lives.
- 2) Rarely in history has anyone shown as much love for another person as did Abu Bakr ؓ for the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Bakr's own life was on a precarious footing; his wounds were life-threatening, and he ؓ needed rest and nourishment; yet upon regaining consciousness he asked not about his own condition, but about the well-being of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Annoying his fellow clansmen who were worried about him only, Abu Bakr ؓ kept asking about the Prophet ﷺ; he ؓ even took an oath to neither eat nor drink until he ؓ first saw him. Abu Bakr ؓ was in no condition to get up, never mind walk, yet with his determination and profound love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, such difficult obstacles were easily

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Katheer (1/439-441), and *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/30).

overcome. May Allah ﷻ be pleased with him and with all of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ.

- 3) Tribal loyalty, which was a predominant characteristic among Makkah's inhabitants, greatly influenced how people treated one another, and at times even took precedence over religious loyalty. Most of the members of Abu Bakr's subtribe were non-Muslims, yet they threatened to exact revenge against a coreligionist, namely 'Utbah, if Abu Bakr ﷺ were to die.
- 4) Even during the early days of Islam, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ showed good sense in assessing a situation and then in acting cautiously when they sensed danger. Umm Jameel ﷺ displayed these qualities a few times in the above-mentioned story:

First, knowing that the situation in Makkah was rife with tension and that the Muslims had just been physically assaulted, Umm Jameel ﷺ answered Umm Al-Khair by saying that she didn't know either Abu Bakr ﷺ or Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ﷺ. This was a wise move on her part, for Umm Al-Khair was not a Muslim and might have wanted to act as a spy on behalf of the Quraish; also, Umm Jameel ﷺ kept secret the fact that she had embraced Islam.

Second, based on the above-mentioned facts, Umm Jameel ﷺ wanted to directly convey news to Abu Bakr ﷺ, and so she wisely made an overture to Umm Al-Khair, offering to go with her to her son.

Third, Umm Jameel ﷺ probably did so at an unconscious level, but she certainly gained Umm Al-Khair's appreciation when she yelled out on her son's behalf: "By Allah, those who have done this to you are indeed the people of wickedness and disbelief." Earlier, Umm Jameel ﷺ showed similar solicitude for Umm Al-Khair's son when she said, "If you want, I will go with you to your son." To be sure, gaining Umm Al-Khair's trust made it easier for Umm Jameel ﷺ to meet and speak with Abu Bakr ﷺ.

Fourth, once she reached Abu Bakr ﷺ, Umm Jameel ﷺ was especially careful not to let any non-Muslim overhear their conversation. She still didn't completely trust Umm Al-Khair, who was after all still a polytheist. Only after Abu Bakr ﷺ told her

that she could speak freely in the presence of Umm Al-Khair ؓ did Umm Jameel ؓ tell him about the Prophet ﷺ; and even still, she did not say where the Prophet ﷺ was staying. She finally did say where the Prophet ﷺ was staying when she was forced to do so through a direct question from Abu Bakr ؓ. Throughout the Makkan period of the Prophet's biography, all Muslims were similarly careful, which of course contributed to the fact that the Quraish never found out about the exact location of the secret meeting place of the Muslims.

Fifth, when Abu Bakr ؓ asked Umm Jameel ؓ to take him to the house of Al-Arqam, she did not immediately agree to do so; instead, she waited until the tense situation outside calmed down, so as to decrease the chances of being seen.

- 5) Hard work, affliction, trials, and ordeals – these are followed, as a general rule in life, by reward. After suffering a difficult ordeal at the hands of the Quraish, Abu Bakr ؓ asked the Prophet ﷺ to invite his mother, Umm Al-Khair ؓ, to Islam, and to supplicate for her. And so the ordeal ended with Umm Al-Khair ؓ embracing Islam.
- 6) Because of his special relation to the Prophet ﷺ and because he would stick close to the Prophet ﷺ during the most dangerous of situations, Abu Bakr ؓ was – despite having the protection of his clan, and despite being, at least prior to Islam, a high-ranking member of Quraish society – one of the most persecuted of the Prophet's Companions ؓ.

2) Bilaal ؓ

As their frustration increased, the Quraish began to persecute the Muslims more and more severely, often reaching savage levels of cruelty. Their victims of choice, or rather of convenience, were weak Muslims – those who had no protection and were not rank and file members of the nobility, and also slaves, Bilaal ؓ being a member of the latter category. In punishing the weak, the Quraish had more than one goal in mind. First, they wanted to use torture to make Muslims abandon their religion. Second, they wanted to set

an example of weak Muslims, so as to frighten Muslims who had some form of protection. And third – which isn't as much of a goal as it is a reason – they wanted to vent their anger and frustration. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ؓ said, "The first group to openly proclaim their Islam consisted of seven people: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ; Abu Bakr ؓ; 'Ammar ؓ; 'Ammar's mother, Sumayyah ؓ; Suhaib ؓ; Bilaal ؓ; and Al-Miqdaad ؓ. As for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Allah protected him through his uncle, Abu Taalib. And as for Abu Bakr ؓ, Allah ﷻ protected him through his people (Abu Bakr's clan). And as for the rest of them, the Quraish took them, attired them in armour made of iron and melted them in the sun. Each of them gave them (i.e., their torturers) what they wanted (i.e., they uttered words of disbelief, though they did so under duress, and their hearts were at rest with faith), except for Bilaal ؓ, for losing his life for Allah ﷻ was an easy matter for him (when it came to choosing between death and uttering words of disbelief), and it (killing him) became easy for his people (i.e., they had no qualms about torturing him to the point of death). They gave him to children, who went around with him in the valleys of Makkah. And all the while, he continued to say: 'One, One (i.e., Allah is One; none has the right to worshipped but Allah, etc.).'"^[1]

Bilaal ؓ had no family to protect him. In fact, Bilaal ؓ was hardly considered a human being; his only purpose, according to the mind-set of the Quraish, was to serve and obey, to be bought and sold like livestock. That he should have an opinion in important matters was considered ludicrous, which is why the Quraish, fearing a change in their way of life, became outraged when Bilaal ؓ and other slaves embraced Islam.

Let it not be said, or for that matter thought – as many opponents of Islam say and think – that slaves embraced Islam in order to improve their lot in Makkan society. The message of the Prophet ﷺ reached the inner depths of Bilaal's heart, as well as the hearts

^[1] *Musnad Ahmad* (1/404), with a chain that is *Hasan* (acceptable).

of other slaves that embraced Islam. For how did embracing Islam improve the position of slaves in society? Any slave who embraced Islam was not given a free pass to join parties that were thrown by the nobility; to the contrary, they were tortured, whipped, and taken out to the hot sands of the desert to be melted and crushed by rocks. It stands as a fact, therefore, that, like other better-off Companions ﷺ, slaves who embraced Islam did so because faith had entered their hearts. And to uphold their faith, they were willing to sacrifice everything, even their very lives. Bilaal ﷺ in particular decided to be tortured to death rather than to utter words of disbelief, even though doing so is permissible, so long as one is forced to do so, and so long as one is at rest with faith in his heart, both of which conditions Bilaal ﷺ had fulfilled.

One day, Bilaal ﷺ was tortured so severely that his torturers realized that he was too weakened from their constant beatings to be of any more use to them. Abu Bakr ﷺ then walked by and addressed Ummayyah ibn Khalaf, Bilaal's owner, saying, "Will you not fear Allah regarding this poor person? Until when (will you continue to persecute him)!"

"You are the one who corrupted him," said Ummayyah, "So you save him from his present condition."

"I will do so," said Abu Bakr ﷺ. "I have a black slave who is stronger than him and firmer than him upon your religion. I will trade you him for Bilaal."

"I indeed accept (your offer)," said Ummayyah. Once the trade was completed, Abu Bakr ﷺ declared that Bilaal ﷺ was now a free man.^[1] But according to another narration, Abu Bakr ﷺ purchased Bilaal ﷺ for either 7 *Awaaqin* (a measurement used for gold) or 40 *Awaaqin* of gold.^[2]

After every trial, there is a payoff, a reward of some kind. After suffering cruel and inhuman torture at the hands of the Quraish, after having almost died from that torture, Bilaal ﷺ was not only

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/394).

^[2] *At-Tarbiyyah Al-Qiyaadiyyah* (1/140).

purchased by a caring and benevolent Muslim, but he ﷺ also became a free man at the same time. From that time onward, Bilaal ﷺ showed the same dedication to Islam as a free man as he did when he ﷺ was a slave. In fact, he ﷺ was able to do more. Being a free man, he was able to dedicate all of his energies to the service of Islam. Bilaal ﷺ continued thereafter to adhere closely to the company of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who, upon his death, was pleased with Bilaal ﷺ, and who, during his lifetime, once said to Bilaal ﷺ, "Indeed, last night, I heard the sound of your footsteps ahead of me in Paradise."^[1] As for Bilaal's ranking among the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, 'Umar ﷺ would say, "Abu Bakr is our chief, and he has freed our chief (i.e., Bilaal ﷺ)."^[2]

One of the greatest problems the Companions ﷺ faced was the constantly increasing frequency and intensity of the torture sessions to which poor and weak Muslims were subjected. Not that they could do much, for all Muslims, both rich and poor, were being subjected to persecution to at least some degree. Nonetheless, Abu Bakr ﷺ found a way to help some slaves that were being tortured; he purchased them and then freed them, regardless of the cost.

One of the slaves Abu Bakr ﷺ freed was 'Amir ibn Fuhairah ﷺ, who later participated in the battles of Badr and Uhud and was then later martyred on the Day of Bair Ma'oonah; two others were Umm 'Ubais ﷺ and Zinneerah ﷺ. Upon being set free, Zinneerah ﷺ lost her eyesight; of course, the Quraish took the opportunity to say, "It was none other than Al-Laat and Al-'Uzzah (two of their idols) who took away her eyesight." Zinneerah ﷺ did not waive in her faith, but instead said, "They have lied...Al-Laat and Al-'Uzzah can neither harm nor benefit." Allah ﷻ then gave her back her eyesight.^[3]

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Virtues"; chapter, "The Virtues of Bilaal ﷺ." *Hadeeth* number: 2458.

^[2] *At-Tabaqaat Al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd (3/232). All of the narrators of this *Hadeeth* are trustworthy.

^[3] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/393).

Abu Bakr ﷺ also freed An-Nahdiyyah ﷺ and her daughter ﷺ. Both mother and daughter belonged to a woman from the Banu 'Abd-ud-Daar clan. On the day they were set free, Abu Bakr ﷺ passed by them; they were carrying flour for their mistress. Abu Bakr ﷺ then went to speak to their mistress, asking her to set them free, but she refused, saying, "By Allah, I will never free them." Abu Bakr ﷺ asked her to take back her oath, and she agreed to do so, but then said, "You are the one who corrupted them, so you set them free (i.e., buy them from me and then set them free)."

"How much will you sell them for?" asked Abu Bakr ﷺ. After she told him their price, Abu Bakr ﷺ said, "Then I have taken them, and they are now free (women)." He ﷺ then went back to An-Nahdiyyah and her daughter ﷺ in order to tell them the good news. "Give her back her flour," he ﷺ added. They said, "O Abu Bakr, shall we not first finish (doing what was required of us regarding this flour) and then return it to her?" He ﷺ said, "If you want, you may do so."^[1]

Observe how Islam set the two women ﷺ and Abu Bakr ﷺ on an equal footing; they addressed him not as one would address one's master, but as one would address one's equal. Also, observe how Abu Bakr ﷺ was humble enough to agree to their decision, even though he ﷺ had just done them a tremendous service by freeing them. And observe how Islam polished the manners of An-Nahdiyyah ﷺ and her daughter ﷺ; they could have just left the flour where it was, or they could have simply returned it, but they insisted upon finishing the task that was assigned to them and then returning the flour to their former mistress.

Abu Bakr ﷺ also purchased and then freed a young female slave from the Banu Muammil clan. After she became a Muslim, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ﷺ, who was still a polytheist at the time, physically beat her, in order to make her renounce her faith. During a given torture session, 'Umar ﷺ would stop hitting her

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/393).

and say, "I apologize to you (for stopping); it is only boredom that has made me stop (hitting you)." Not allowing him to have the satisfaction of such an insult, she said, "It is indeed Allah ﷻ Who made you become bored (so you would stop hitting me)."^[1]

Abu Bakr's heart flowed with sympathy and compassion for the weak. He ﷺ spent a great deal of his wealth on setting slaves free, doing so even before Verses of the Qur'an were revealed on the topic – Verses that exhorted Muslims to free slaves and that promised a great reward for those who did so.

Most people among the Quraish made fun of Abu Bakr ﷺ, deeming it a waste of money to spend so much money on the poor and weak. Even his father, who was still a polytheist, discouraged him from setting slaves free, considering the act of doing so to be a fruitless venture. One day, he said to Abu Bakr ﷺ, "O my son, I see that you are freeing weak slaves. If you have to do what you are doing, then you should at least free strong men who could protect and defend you." Abu Bakr ﷺ answered, "My father, I am doing this for Allah 'Azza wa Jall (the Possessor of might and majesty) only (and for no other purpose)." In Abu Bakr's mind, Muslim slaves were his equals and his brothers in faith; for that matter, all of the polytheists on the earth were not, in his mind (and in reality), equal in value to a single Muslim slave. It is no wonder, therefore, that Allah ﷻ revealed Verses about Abu Bakr's generosity that will be recited until the Last Day. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَىٰ وَاتَّقَىٰ ۖ وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ فَسَنِيَرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَىٰ ۖ وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ ۖ وَاسْتَعْتَقَىٰ ۖ وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ فَسَنِيَرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَىٰ ۖ وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّىٰ ۚ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَىٰ ۖ وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَىٰ ۚ فَأَنْذَرْتُمْ نَارًا تَلْطَفُ ۚ لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى ۖ الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ۖ وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى ۖ الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۚ وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ مِن نِّعْمَةٍ تُجْزَىٰ ۖ إِلَّا إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَىٰ ۚ وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَىٰ﴾ (٢١)

^[1] As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah by Ibn Hishaam (1/393).

“As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him, and believes in Al-Husna [the Best (i.e., either La ilaha illallah : none has the right to be worshipped but Allah) or a reward from Allah (i.e., Allah will compensate him for what he will spend in Allah’s Way or bless him with Paradise)]. We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness). But he who is greedy, miser and thinks himself self-sufficient, and gives the lie to Al-Husna; we will make smooth for him the path for evil; and what will his wealth benefit him when he goes down (in destruction). Truly, Ours it is (to give) guidance. And truly, unto Us (belong) the last (Hereafter) and the first (this world). Therefore I have warned you of a Fire blazing fiercely (Hell). None shall enter it save the most wretched, who denies and turns away. And Al-Muttaqoon (the pious and righteous) will be far removed from it (Hell). He who spends his wealth for increase in self-purification, and have in his mind no favour from anyone for which a reward is expected in return, except only the desire to seek the Countenance of his Lord, the Most High. He surely will be pleased (when he will enter Paradise).” (Qur’an 92: 5-21)^[1]

To be sure, Muslims desperately need to revive the deeds of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ, in order to bring unity to a nation whose people are constantly being subjected to persecution, torture, and death at the hands of Islam’s enemies.

3) ‘Ammmaar ibn Yaasir ؓ; His Father, Yaasir ؓ; and His Mother, Sumayyah ؓ

‘Ammaar’s father, Yaasir ؓ, was not a native of Makkah, which helps to explain why he was so vulnerable to persecution at the hands of the Quraish; he was from the Banu ‘Anas, one of the tribes of Yemen. Yaasir ؓ and his two brothers, Al-Haarith and Maalik, came to Makkah in search of one of their brothers. Al-Haarith and Maalik eventually returned to Yemen, whereas Yaasir ؓ settled in Makkah. He ؓ allied himself with Abu

^[1] *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (1/319), and *Tafseer Al-Aloosee* (30/152).

Hudhaifah ibn Al-Mugheerah, a member of the Makhzoom clan; the latter married the former off to one of his female slaves; her name was Sumayyah bint Khayyat ؓ, and she bore Yaasir ؓ a son, 'Ammar ؓ. Abu Hudhaifah died shortly thereafter, but before he did, he set 'Ammar ؓ free. Though no one in the family remained a slave, they all owed a form of allegiance to the Makhzoom clan – a relation that would customarily remain after a master freed his slave. So when Yaasir ؓ, Summayyah ؓ, 'Ammar ؓ, and 'Abdullah ؓ – 'Ammar's brother – embraced Islam, it was the Makhzoom clan that was responsible for inflicting punishment upon Yaasir's family. The tormenters would take Yaasir's family out to the hot sands of the desert at high noon and torture them. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would pass by them as they were being tortured and comfort them by saying, "Patience, O family of Yaasir, for indeed, your place of appointment is Paradise."^[1]

It is not surprising that Yaasir's family suffered so much at the hands of the Makhzoom clan, for Abu Jahl, a prominent member of the clan, was one of the staunchest enemies of Islam. One day, Abu Jahl said to Sumayyah ؓ, "You believe in Muhammad only because you are in love with him for his beauty." She reproached Abu Jahl as he deserved to be reproached, and in response, he jabbed her in her private area with a spear and killed her. Sumayyah ؓ became the first martyr in Islam, sacrificing the most valuable thing a person has to offer – her very life. Shortly after she ؓ died, her husband, Yaasir ؓ, became martyred in a similar manner.

The Prophet ﷺ was unable to help Yaasir's family; they ؓ were not slaves, so he ﷺ could not purchase them; and he ﷺ had not the strength to save them from physical torture. All he ﷺ was able to do was to give them glad tidings of Paradise and exhort them to be patient, so that their blessed family could become an example for all proceeding generations.

As for 'Ammar ؓ, he continued to be tortured even after his

^[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibraaheem Al-'Alee (pgs. 97, 98).

parents died. The Quraish were venting their rage when they tortured weak Muslims and slaves, but they were also trying to make them renounce their faith. 'Ammaar ؓ did not succumb to their pressure until the pain they inflicted upon him became too much to bear. After that happened, 'Ammaar ؓ went to the Prophet ﷺ, who, seeing the troubled expression on his face, asked him what had happened. "Evil," 'Ammaar ؓ answered. "By Allah, the polytheists did not leave me (i.e., they didn't stop torturing me), until I spoke evil about you and well about their gods." The Prophet ﷺ said, "What state do you find your heart to be in?" 'Ammaar ؓ answered, "At rest with faith." The Prophet ﷺ then said, "If they return to the same (method of torture), then you return [with the same answer (i.e., as long as your well-being is threatened, as long as you are forced to pronounce words of disbelief, and as long as your heart is at rest with faith, then you may say what you need to say in order to save yourself)]."^[1] Verses were then revealed that confirmed the truthfulness of 'Ammaar ؓ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ
بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ (١٠٦)

"Whoever disbelieved in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with faith – but such as open their breasts to disbelief, – on them is wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a great torment." (Qur'an 16: 106)

'Ammaar ؓ later participated alongside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in every battle that took place between the Muslims and the polytheists.

Both what Bilaal ؓ did and what 'Ammaar ؓ did were permissible ways of reacting to a similar situation. It is up to the *Daa'ee* to reflect on the lessons of both their stories and to

^[1] Refer to *Fiqhus-Seerah* by Al-Ghazaalee (pg. 103).

apply those lessons, without going to the extremes of negligence and extravagance.

4) Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ

Like other Companions ؓ, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ was put to trial in his faith; where he parted from them was in the fact that his torturer, his mother, aimed not to physically torment him but to psychologically torment him. Sa'd's mother was a polytheist, and she vowed to neither eat nor drink until Sa'd ؓ renounced his faith and returned to her religion. Sa'd ؓ said, "This Verse was revealed about me:

﴿وَإِنْ جَهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا﴾

"But if they strive to make you join with Me (in worship) anything (as a partner) of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not." (Qur'an 29: 8)

Sa'd ؓ later narrated his own story: "I was a man who was very dutiful to his mother. Then, when I embraced Islam, she said, 'O Sa'd, what is this religion that I see you have accepted? You will indeed abandon this religion of yours, or I will neither eat nor drink until I die, and then you will be disgraced through me. It will be said (to you): O, killer of his mother.' I said, 'O my mother, I will not do so, for nothing will make me abandon my religion.'" She spent the entire day and night without eating anything; she woke up the following morning in a weakened state. She then spent a second day and night without eating anything, and she woke up on the following morning in a weakened state. Then she spent another day and night without eating anything, and when she woke up on the following morning, she was extremely weak. When I saw that, I said, 'O my mother, you know, by Allah, that were you to have 100 souls, and they all departed one soul at a time, still nothing would make me abandon my religion. So if you want, eat; and if you want, don't eat.' She then ate."^[1]

^[1] Tafseer Ibn Katheer (3/446).

Imam Muslim, may Allah have mercy on him, narrated that the mother of Sa'd swore that she would not eat, drink, or ever speak to him until he disbelieved in his religion. She said to Sa'd ﷺ, "You claim that Allah commanded you to be good to your parents. I am your mother, and I order you to do this (i.e., to disbelieve in Islam)." Sa'd ﷺ later recounted, "She remained (upon her oath) for three days, after which she became so weak that she fainted." 'Umaarah, one of her sons, went to her and gave her something to drink. She began to supplicate against Sa'd ﷺ, and Allah ﷻ then revealed this Verse:

﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي﴾

"And We have enjoined on man to be good and dutiful to his parents; but if they strive to make you join with Me." (Qur'an 29: 8)

When the people close to her wanted to feed her, they would force her mouth open with a stick and then pour food into it. Although his trial was different in nature to the trials that other Muslims were subjected to, Sa'd's trial was nonetheless tremendously difficult for him. And the way in which he acted attests to how deeply *Eemaan* (faith) had penetrated the inner recesses of his heart. No matter what the result, Sa'd ﷺ refused to put his faith and religion on any negotiating table.

5) Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ

Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ lived a life of luxury; no other young man in Makkah lived more comfortably, wore better clothing, or anointed himself with better perfume than he ﷺ did. Mus'ab's parents loved him dearly, and his mother in particular doted upon him a great deal, making sure that he always wore fine and soft clothing. She was so extravagant in her love for her son that, when he slept, she would place beside his head a cup, in which she would mix together dates, cheese, and grease; so that if he woke up hungry, would have.

Mus'ab's life began to change when he heard that the Messenger of

Allah ﷺ was inviting people to embrace Islam. Mus'ab ؓ went to him ﷺ in the house of Al-Arqam and ended up embracing Islam; however, fearing mistreatment from his mother and fellow clansmen, Mus'ab ؓ, like some other early converts, kept his acceptance of Islam a secret. And so he ؓ would secretly visit the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. But his secret was soon found out; one day, after he saw Mus'ab ؓ praying, 'Uthmaan ibn Talhah informed Mus'ab's mother and his fellow clansmen about what he saw. They apprehended Mus'ab ؓ and imprisoned him; he ؓ remained a prisoner until he managed to escape and migrate to Abyssinia during the first of the two famous migrations to that land.

No longer did Mus'ab ؓ lead a life of comfort and luxury; his skin hardened and his body weakened. Nonetheless, the more hardships he faced, the stronger he became in his faith; and the more ill-treatment he received from his relatives, the more determined he ؓ became to make sacrifices for Islam. Mus'ab ؓ continued to strive and to sacrifice until Allah ﷻ honoured him with martyrdom on the Day of Uhud.

Mus'ab ؓ is an ideal example of how Islam transforms an extravagant youth into a real man with a true purpose in life. Hitherto having no other aim in life but to satisfy his desires, Mus'ab ؓ now became a man of purpose, who practically endured many hardships and difficulties for the cause of Islam. The day Mus'ab ؓ entered into the fold of Islam was the day he bade farewell to the comfort and luxury he had previously enjoyed throughout his life; such was the wonderful impact that Islam had on his character. Because of the life Mus'ab ؓ chose, he inevitably had to take various paths of hardship, all for the purpose of strengthening and solidifying his faith. So in spite of all of the poverty and punishment he had to endure, not least of which was being cast off by his relatives, Mus'ab ؓ was content and at peace. With each hardship, his faith strengthened – until he faced and passed his final test on the Day of Uhud, the events of which we will discuss further, *In Sha Allah* (if Allah wills), later on in this work.

6) Khabbaab ibn Al-Arat ﷺ

Khabbaab ﷺ too did not have anyone to protect him once he embraced Islam; he ﷺ worked as a blacksmith in Makkah, and he was allied to a woman named Umm Anmaar, who was from the Khuzaa'ah tribe. Once it became known that Khabbaab ﷺ had embraced Islam, he ﷺ was subjected to brutal torture sessions. The polytheists would heat stones in fire, place the stones on the ground, and make Khabbaab ﷺ lie down on them.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ liked Khabbaab's company and would visit him after he embraced Islam; but when Umm Anmaar found out about that, she took a piece of heated iron and placed it on Khabbaab's head. Later on, when Khabbaab ﷺ complained about what had happened, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "O Allah, help Khabbaab." Not much time passed before Umm Anmaar complained about severe pain in her head, pain that was so intense that her screaming competed in volume with the howling of stray dogs. Cauterization, the process of burning or searing with heat, was often resorted to for wounds and a variety of ailments; and in the case of Umm Anmaar, cauterization was recommended to her as treatment. It was not to a doctor that she needed to visit, but to a blacksmith, and so she betook herself to Khabbaab ﷺ and asked him to cauterize her. At her behest, Khabbaab ﷺ then did to her as she did to him: He ﷺ took a piece of heated iron and used it to cauterize her head. The Prophet's supplication was answered in the most wonderful of ways, for it was Umm Anmaar herself who went to Khabbaab ﷺ and asked him to cauterize her.

When the weak Muslims of Makkah began to suffer more and more at the hands of the Quraish, Khabbaab ﷺ went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, "Will you not ask help for us? Will you not invoke Allah for us?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who had been resting his head on his robe underneath the shade of the Ka'bah, sat up. His face turned red and he ﷺ said, "Among those who came before you, a man would have (a pit) dug for him in the ground; he would be placed inside of it, and then a saw

would be brought and placed over his head. Then he would be split into two (halves), yet that did not turn him away from his religion. What is beneath his flesh (i.e., beneath the flesh of a man from those who came before you), in terms of bone and nerve, would be combed (off) with combs of iron, yet that did not deter him from his religion. By Allah, He (i.e., Allah ﷻ) will indeed complete this matter (i.e., will make Islam supreme) until a rider will travel from Sinai to Hadramoot, and fear no one (along the way) but Allah, or (he may also fear an attack of) a wolf upon his sheep; but you indeed are in a rush (for matters to improve before the appointed time comes for that to happen).’’^[1]

Commenting on this *Hadeeth*, Shaikh Salmaan Al-‘Audah – may Allah protect him – said:

“How perfect indeed is Allah! What happened that made the Prophet’s face turn red, that made him sit up (in that state) from his lying down position, and that made him speak to his Companions (for Khabbaab ؓ did not go alone) in such a strong and powerful tone? Was he ﷺ reproaching them because they asked him to supplicate for them? Of course not! Far be it from him to do that, for he was kind and merciful to the people of his nation. The tone of (their) request – ‘Will you not supplicate for us? Will you not ask help for us?’ – suggested the reality that was behind it: that it was coming from hearts that were worn out by punishment, overcome by fatigue, and crushed by affliction. They were searching out for quick relief from their travails, and they felt that help was too slow in coming. But the Prophet ﷺ knew that for each matter there is an appointed time and that before help, comes affliction. Messengers ﷺ were put to trial, but then the final good outcome was theirs. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا اسْتَيْشَسَ الرَّسُولُ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِّبُوا جَاءَهُمْ نَصْرُنَا فَنُجِّي
مَنْ نَشَاءُ وَلَا يَرُدُّ بَأْسُنَا عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ١١٠﴾

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Book of Virtues”; chapter, “The Signs of Prophethood in Islam.” *Hadeeth* number: 3612.

'(They were reprieved) until, when the Messengers gave up hope and thought that they were denied (by their people), then came to them Our Help, and whomsoever We willed were delivered. And Our Punishment cannot be warded off from the people who are Mujrimoon (criminals, disobedients to Allah, sinners, disbelievers, polytheists).'' (Qur'an 12: 110)

The Prophet ﷺ was aware of the precarious position his Companions ﷺ were in, and he ﷺ knew how worn out they had become from constant torture; their very faith was being tested. Just by reading the text of the (above-mentioned) narration, it is hard for one to understand the reality of the situation that led them to ask the Prophet ﷺ to supplicate for them and invoke Allah ﷻ to help them; only if one has experienced something similar to what they experienced can one understand the feelings and emotions that overwhelmed their souls."

The Prophet ﷺ trained his Companions ﷺ to do the following:

- 1) To follow the way of previous Prophets ﷺ, Messengers ﷺ, and their followers, in terms of how they patiently endured punishment and torture in the path of Allah ﷻ.
- 2) To be attached not to this world, but to what Allah prepared in Paradise, in terms of bliss and reward for patient believers; and to not be deceived by the material pleasures that are in the hands of the disbelievers.
- 3) To be positive about the future, knowing fully well that Allah ﷻ will make Islam reign in the life of this world and humiliate in it wrongdoers and the people of disbelief.

Furthermore, the Prophet ﷺ constantly strove to improve the situation of his Companions ﷺ, to protect them from the polytheists, to establish for them their own country, within which they could freely worship Allah ﷻ without having cause to worry about being punished or tortured for doing so.^[1]

^[1] Refer to *Al-Ghurabaa Al-Awwaloon* (pgs. 145, 146).

Later on in his life, Khabbaab ؓ described some of the ways in which the Quraish mistreated him and other Muslims. In one such account, he ؓ said, "I was a blacksmith. Al-'Aas ibn Waail owed me money, and when I went to him in order to collect what he owed me, he said, 'I will not pay you back until you disbelieve in Muhammad.' I said, 'You will die and be resurrected before I disbelieve!' He said, 'And will I be resurrected after death? If that is the case, then I will pay you back when I will return (after death) to my wealth and children.'" The following Verse was then revealed for Al-'Aas ibn Waail^[1] :

﴿أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتِيَنَّكَ مَالًا وَّوَلَدًا ﴿٧٧﴾ أَطَّلَعَ الْغَيْبَ أَمِ
 اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا ﴿٧٨﴾ كَلَّا سَكَتَ لَكُمْ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا
 ﴿٧٩﴾ وَنَرِثُهُ مَا يَقُولُ وَيَأْتِينَا فَرْدًا ﴿٨٠﴾﴾

"Have you seen him who disbelieved in Our Ayaat (this Qur'an and Muhammad ﷺ) and (yet) says : "I shall certainly be given wealth and children (if I will be alive (again))," Has he known the unseen or has he taken a covenant from the Most Beneficent (Allah)? Nay! We shall record what he says, and We shall increase his torment (in the Hell) ; and We shall inherit from him (at his death) all that he talks of (i.e., wealth and children which We have bestowed upon him in this world), and he shall come to Us alone." (Qur'an 19: 77-80)

During his caliphate, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ asked Khabbaab ؓ to inform him of some of the hardships he faced in the early days of Islam. In response to the *Khaleefah's* question, Khabbaab ؓ simply raised his shirt, revealing a sight that completely shocked 'Umar ؓ, who said, "I have not seen anything like this before!" Khabbaab's back was filled with crevices and holes, the insides of which were the charred remains of his flesh. Khabbaab ؓ said, "O Leader of the Believers, they (the polytheists of Makkah) lighted a fire and cooked me in it. Then a man placed his foot over my

^[1] Refer to *Musnad Ahmad* (5/111).

chest.” According to one account, Khabbaab ؓ then said, “It was nothing other than my back that cooled the ground, and nothing other than my fat (and flesh) that extinguished the fire.”

7) ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ood ؓ

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was kind and gentle in his dealings not just with the nobility and tribal chieftains, but also with young children and teenagers. A meeting between the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ood ؓ, who was then still an adolescent, illustrates that kindness and gentleness. Years after that meeting took place, ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ood ؓ gave an account of it: “I was a young adolescent, and was herding sheep for ‘Uqbah ibn Abee Mu’ait, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ passed by me. He (the Prophet ﷺ) said, ‘O young lad, is there any milk?’ I said, ‘Yes, but I am entrusted with (taking care of these sheep).’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Then is there a sheep that has not been mounted by a male sheep (i.e., a sheep that is not supposed to have milk in its udder, in which case ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ood ؓ would not be breaching his trust)?’ I brought him (such) a sheep, and he wiped its udder. Milk came out, and as he milked the sheep, the milk was deposited in a container (this was one of the miracles that Allah ﷻ blessed the Prophet ﷺ with, since the kind of sheep he ﷺ asked for should not have had milk in its udder). The Prophet ﷺ drank, and he ﷺ gave Abu Bakr ؓ (the container) to drink. He then said to the udder, ‘Contract,’ and it became contracted. I then went to him after that and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, teach me from this speech (i.e., from the Qur’an).’ He ﷺ passed his hand over my hand (in a gesture of kindness and gentleness) and said, ‘May Allah have mercy on you, for indeed you are a young lad who is *Mu’allam* (i.e., who is inspired or guided to what is correct and good).’”^[1]

These inspiring words of the Prophet ﷺ certainly had a profound impact on ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ood’s character. When he grew up,

^[1] *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/32), and *Siyyar ‘Alaam An-Nubalaa* (1/465).

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ؓ became one of the most learned of scholars among the Prophet's Companions ؓ. Having embraced Islam in the early days of the Prophet's Mission, 'Abdullah ؓ migrated both to Abyssinia and then to Al-Madeenah; he ؓ participated in the Battle of Badr and all ensuing battles; he adhered closely to the company of the Prophet ﷺ, so much so that he ؓ would try to always be there to hand the Prophet ﷺ his shoes, or, when necessary, to take them from him.^[1]

Perhaps 'Abdullah ؓ is best remembered for being the first Companion ؓ to openly recite the Qur'an in front of a gathering of polytheists, an amazingly brave feat considering the fact that 'Abdullah ؓ was not a member of a subtribe in Makkah, but was only allied to one, which means that he ؓ had no family to protect him. What is more, 'Abdullah ؓ was skinny, with especially thin calves, and not a person who could defend himself against large or muscular attackers. But the eventuality of a physical attack on his person was probably far away from the thoughts of 'Abdullah ؓ, who stood right in front of Quraish's central place of gathering and recited the Qur'an to men whose hearts and ears were closed to the truth.

It began when, one day, the Prophet's Companions said to one another, "By Allah, the people of the Quraish have never before heard the Qur'an being recited for them in the open. Where is the man that will make them hear it?" The most unlikely of volunteers, unlikely because of his size and status, said, "I will do it!" That volunteer was 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ؓ. The Companions ؓ said, "We indeed fear that they will harm you. What we want is a man who has a clan to protect him from the people if they intend to do him harm." 'Abdullah ؓ said, "Leave me to go, for indeed, Allah ﷻ will protect me." 'Abdullah ؓ went to the Ka'bah ؓ in the morning, at which time the Quraish were seated nearby in their gatherings. 'Abdullah stood at Al-Maqaam (the Maqaam of Ibraaheem ؑ, which is right in front of the

^[1] *Al-Isaabah* (6/214).

Ka'bah) and recited in a loud voice:

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

He then began to recite "The Most Beneficent" Chapter of the Qur'an:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ ① عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ②﴾

"The Most Beneficent (Allah)! Has taught (you mankind) the Qur'an (by His Mercy)." (Qur'an 55: 1, 2)

He ﷺ continued to recite the Chapter; meanwhile, the people of the Quraish were all staring at him in wonder, trying to size up the situation, for this was truly unprecedented, considering how in their minds 'Abdullah ﷺ was merely a young shepherd who was only supposed to serve. They began to say, "What is Ibn Umm 'Abd saying?" 'Ibn Umm 'Abd' is the disparaging name they had for 'Abdullah ﷺ. Some of them said, "He is reciting some of that which Muhammad ﷺ has come with!" Upon realizing that that was the case, they stood up and began to strike him in his face, but not even that had an effect on 'Abdullah ﷺ, who continued to recite the Chapter while he was being beaten up! He ﷺ reached as far as he was able to reach in the Chapter, and then he ﷺ returned to his Companions ﷺ, who, upon seeing his bruised face, were greatly moved by his condition. They said to him, "This is what we feared would happen to you"; to which, 'Abdullah ﷺ lightly answered, "The enemies of Allah were never more insignificant to me than they are now. And if you wish, I will go to them tomorrow morning and do the same thing." They answered, "No, this is sufficient for you. You have made them hear that which they dislike."^[1] Such was the faith and courage of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ﷺ; not even a brutal mob attack deterred him from continuing to convey the message of Islam.

^[1] Refer to *Ibn Hisham* (1/314-315), and *Asad Al-Ghaabah* (3/385, 386).

8) Khalid ibn Sa'eed ibn Al-'Aas ﷺ

Khalid's acceptance of Islam was prompted by a dream he ﷺ saw during the early days of Islam. He ﷺ dreamt that he was on the brink of falling into fire. There was someone who was pushing him into it, but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ held on to him, in order to prevent him from falling. It was at this point of the dream that Khalid ﷺ woke up in a state of alarm, being certain that he had just seen a true dream. He ﷺ related the contents of the dream to Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ﷺ, who said, "Goodness was intended for you (in your dream). Here is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, so follow him." Khalid ﷺ went to him and embraced Islam.

Although Khalid ﷺ tried to keep his Islam a secret from his father, who was a staunch polytheist, the latter soon discerned what had happened based on the fact that his son remained aloof from his side for long periods at a time, a phenomenon that began around the time when the Prophet ﷺ first began preaching the message of Islam. Khalid's father sent his other sons – all of whom had not yet embraced Islam – to search out for Khalid ﷺ. When Khalid ﷺ came back with them, his father censured him and beat him with a stick (or a rapper) that was in his hand, and continued to do so until the stick broke upon making impact with Khalid's head. Khalid ﷺ refused to renounce his faith, and so his father imprisoned him and forbade his brothers from speaking to him. The situation turned from bad to worse: Khalid's father began to starve Khalid ﷺ and, at one point, made him go without water for three days. Hoping for his reward from Allah ﷻ, Khalid ﷺ remained patient. Flushing with anger, Khalid's father once said, "By Allah, I will prevent you from getting sustenance." Khalid ﷺ replied, "If you prevent me, then Allah will provide for me that which will nourish me and keep me alive." The torture did not continue indefinitely, for Khalid ﷺ eventually managed to escape from his father. He then migrated to Abyssinia with other Muslims on the second of the two famous migrations to that land.

9) ‘Uthmaan ibn Maz’oon ﷺ

When ‘Uthmaan ibn Maz’oon ﷺ embraced Islam, his relatives from the Banu Jumh clan began to mistreat him, and no one more so than Umayyah ibn Khalaf, who was a particularly vile and brutal persecutor. Like other Muslims who were able to or who absolutely needed to, ‘Uthmaan ibn Maz’oon ﷺ migrated to Abyssinia, where he could freely practice Islam, without the fear of punishment or torture. However, it was soon wrongly conveyed to the Muslims of Abyssinia that the situation of Muslims in Makkah had improved. ‘Uthmaan ﷺ, along with others, then returned to Makkah, only to find out that, if anything, the situation had worsened.

Upon arriving at the border of Makkah, ‘Uthmaan ibn Maz’oon ﷺ faced a difficult situation, for who was going to protect him from persecution? But in the end, he was able to enter Makkah under the protection of Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah. Some Muslims had similar guardians to protect them; the clearest example is that of the Prophet ﷺ, who had protection from his uncle, Abu Taalib. What this meant is that the guardian, or protector, openly announced that no one could touch the person who was under his protection. People generally honoured the guardian’s pledge of protection, so long as the guardian was a polytheist and a rank and file member of Quraish’s nobility – conditions that both Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah and Abu Taalib fulfilled. Thus ‘Uthmaan ﷺ was able to walk the streets of Makkah in almost complete safety; this actually bothered ‘Uthmaan ﷺ a great deal, for he ﷺ was not at peace with the knowledge that, while he was safe, his brothers in faith suffered on a daily basis. Although he ﷺ could do nothing to help them, he nonetheless felt a great deal of anxiety for being in a better situation than they were in; he said to himself, “It is a great defect in myself that I go about safely in the morning and afternoon, under the protection of a man from the people of polytheism, while my companions ﷺ and the people of my religion are subjected to hardship and affliction for the cause of Allah ﷻ.”

‘Uthmaan ؓ then went to Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah and said, “O Abu ‘Abd-Shams (i.e., Al-Waleed), you have fulfilled your obligation, but I now return to you your protection.”

“My nephew, why?” asked Al-Waleed. “Perhaps you have been harmed or violated in some way.”

“No,” said ‘Uthmaan ؓ, “But I am content with the protection of Allah, and I do not want to seek out the protection of anyone else.”

“Then go to the *Masjid* and openly renounce my protection, just as I gave it to you openly.” The two of them then went to the *Masjid*, and in front of the people that were gathered there, ‘Uthmaan ؓ pronounced that he was no longer under the protection of Al-Waleed. Upon renouncing Al-Waleed’s protection, ‘Uthmaan ؓ sat down in one of Quraish’s gatherings. Among those present was Labeed ibn Rabe’ah, the famous poet. Labeed was reciting some of his poetry. “Indeed, everything other than Allah is false,” Labeed said. ‘Uthmaan ؓ said, “You have spoken the truth.”

“And every instance of happiness must necessarily come to an end,” continued Labeed.

“You have uttered a lie,” said ‘Uthmaan ؓ. “The happiness of Paradise never comes to an end!”

Labeed, who was not a native member of the Quraish, said, “O people of Quraish, a person who would sit among was never before harmed (like this)! When has this started among you?”

One man among those gathered said, “Indeed, he is one among other foolish people that are with him; they have parted from our religion, so please do not mind what he says.” ‘Uthmaan ؓ refuted the man’s words, and the situation between them soon escalated, until the man stood up and struck ‘Uthmaan ؓ in the eye, causing it to turn green in colour.

Standing nearby, Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah saw and heard all that had happened; he said to ‘Uthmaan ؓ, “My nephew, by

Allah, your eye needed not the blow that was inflicted to it, for you had over you (my) secure protection."

"By Allah," 'Uthmaan ؓ said, "My good eye is in need of that which afflicted its sister (i.e., his other eye) in the way of Allah ﷻ. And indeed, I am under the protection of He Who is mightier and more able than you are, O Abu 'Abd-Shams." Feeling sorry for his relative, Al-Waleed repeated his offer to protect 'Uthmaan ؓ, but the latter outright refused. 'Uthmaan ؓ didn't have to forego Al-Waleed's protection, but he did so anyway, desiring reward from Allah ﷻ.

When 'Uthmaan ؓ migrated to Al-Madeenah, a woman named Umm Al-'Alaa Al-Ansaariyah ؓ provided him with a place to sleep. Years later, after he ؓ died, Umm Al-'Alaa ؓ saw a dream about him; in it, 'Uthmaan ؓ had (with him) a flowing river. Umm Al-'Alaa ؓ later went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and informed him about what she ؓ had seen. The Prophet ﷺ said, "That is his (good) work (i.e., good deeds)."^[1]

There were other Muslims who also suffered at the hands of the Quraish, and who also remained firm upon their religion, despite the ill treatment they received from their fathers and relatives. For the cause of Islam, they were willing to sacrifice all of the comfort and worldly pleasures they enjoyed prior to entering the fold of Islam, because they hoped for their reward from Allah ﷻ.

It is important to note that persecution was not limited to men only; many Muslim women were also victims of punishment and torture – women such as Sumayyah bint Khayyaat; Faatimah bint Al-Khattaab; Labeelah, the young girl of the Banu Muammil clan; Zinneerah Ar-Roomiyyah; An-Nahdiyyah and her daughter; Umm 'Ubais; Humaamah, mother of Bilaal; and others – may Allah be pleased with them all.

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, "The Book of Dream Interpretation"; chapter, "The Dreams of Women." *Hadeeth* numbers: 7003 and 7004.

The Wisdom Behind Passive Resistance In Makkah; And How, While In Makkah, The Prophet ﷺ Concentrated Mainly On Spiritual Development

Throughout the Makkan phase of the Prophet's life, Muslims did not physically fight back against the Quraish. The humble position of the Muslims bothered some Companions ﷺ, primarily the younger ones among them. One day, while still in Makkah, 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn 'Auf ؓ and some of his Muslim friends ؓ went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Prophet of Allah, we were honoured when we were polytheists; ever since we have had faith, we have been humiliated." They were not having doubts about their faith, but rather wanted to be able to fight back against their polytheistic persecutors. The Prophet ﷺ said to them, "Verily, I have been ordered to forgive, so do not fight the people (i.e., the Quraish)."^[1] Some Islamic researchers have attempted to pinpoint, or infer from historical narrations, the divine wisdom behind fighting not being legislated during the Makkan period of the Prophet's life. One such researcher was Sayyid Qutub – may Allah have mercy on him – who said, "The conclusions we have arrived at (regarding this issue) we do not assert authoritatively, because we would then have made ourselves gods above Allah ﷻ and we would have mentioned the reasons and wisdom behind things, when we could very well be wrong. Whenever the believer is commanded to believe or do something as an Islamic duty, then it is in his purview to only submit, since Allah ﷻ is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. When we infer and say that such and such is the wisdom or reason for a given legislation, we do so using our ability to reason, with the understanding that we are mentioning a possibility (and not the concrete truth), since none knows the reality (and truth and wisdom behind things) but Allah ﷻ. I am referring here to when Allah ﷻ does not explicitly mention the wisdom or reason for a

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* (1/158).

given legislation in a revealed source (the Qur'an and *Sunnah*).'' Keeping this in mind, I list below some of the reasons why fighting was not legislated in Makkah; these reasons complement one another, meaning that two or more of them can be considered as partial reasons and that the correctness of one reason does not necessarily mean that another is false.

- 1) The Makkan phase of the Prophet's life was a period of training and preparation for things to come. Part of that training involved teaching the Prophet's Companions ﷺ to be patient in the face of adversity, to not lose their temper quickly, to follow the orders of the Prophet ﷺ, regardless of their own opinions regarding matters. All of this training took place in a practical setting; Muslims were subjected to harsh treatment, yet they were ordered to not take up arms.
- 2) In a society like that of the Quraish, peaceful preaching has a stronger impact than non-peaceful actions. The polytheists among the Quraish were arrogant and obsessed with the concept of tribal loyalty; fighting them, during the Makkan phase of the Prophet's biography, would possibly have made them even more obstinate in the face of the truth; revenge for killings would have then become a common occurrence, and Islam would possibly have been transformed in the minds of people from an important message to a cause for revenge killings.
- 3) One possible reason was to prevent battles from taking place inside every household. It was not the chiefs of the Quraish who directly punished and tortured every Muslim; rather, the task of torturing individual Muslims was delegated to the leaders of subtribes or to guardians – such as fathers – of individuals. What fighting would have meant in such a situation and in such a society is that killing would have taken place in each home, and then Islam would have been blamed. As it was, the Quraish would say to foreign delegates that Muhammad ﷺ divided father from son. How would matters have stood, then, had a Muslim child been ordered to kill his disbelieving father?

- 4) Another wisdom is that Allah ﷻ of course knew that many among those who obstinately opposed the truth and tortured Muslims would one day sincerely join the ranks of the Muslim nation; indeed, some of them would go on to become leaders of the Muslim nation; was not 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ one such person?
- 5) The prevailing conditions in Makkah made peaceful resistance a more potent strategy than the taking up of arms. In a tribal setting, where practically everyone was related in some way to his fellow tribesmen, people would stand up to help someone who had been wronged, especially if he was a member of the nobility or a fellow clansman. Consider the example of Ibn Ad-Dughnah, who declared Abu Bakr ؓ to be under his protection when the latter was forced to leave Makkah by its people and intended to migrate to Abyssinia. Ibn Ad-Dughnah felt that, by forcing a nobleman like Abu Bakr ؓ to leave Makkah, the Quraish were bringing disgrace upon themselves and upon all Arabs. Also, consider the example of how certain polytheists, realizing that the Banu Haashim clan was being wronged, worked to bring an end to Quraish's boycott against them. And there are many more examples of this from the Prophet's biography.
- 6) Muslims were few in number and were constricted within the boundaries of Makkah; the message of Islam had not yet reached the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, except on a very limited scale. It is interesting to note that, before the Prophet's migration to Al-Madeenah, the various tribes of the Arabian Peninsula took a neutral stance regarding the struggle that was taking place between the Quraish and a few of its members; they were all simply waiting to see what the outcome was going to be. If such a battle occurred, the few Muslims there were in Makkah would likely have been killed. Even if the Muslims managed to fight well and killed many polytheists in Makkah, many polytheists would still have remained; polytheism would have remained strong, and Islam would have weakened with many of its followers dead.

- 7) There was no pressing need to fight, for the goals of that particular stage of the Prophet's *Da'wah* were being fulfilled. In Al-Madeenah, defending Muslims from outside enemies was important, but so was spreading the message of Islam to the far corners of the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. In Makkah, however, it was hard enough to simply preserve the life of the Prophet ﷺ and be able to preach to the Quraish. Despite constant persecution at the hands of the Quraish, both of these goals were being fulfilled. The looming threat of Banu Haashim's swords prevented the Quraish from trying to kill the Prophet ﷺ. To be sure, Quraish's leaders did what they could to weaken the effect of the Prophet's *Da'wah*. But fearing reprisals from the Banu Haashim clan, they did not dare to physically prevent the Prophet ﷺ from walking in the midst of their gatherings and inviting them to Islam. Thus the Prophet ﷺ was to be found everywhere – beside the Ka'bah, in community gatherings, standing on top of Mount As-Safaa – preaching the message of Islam. Witnessing this, Quraish's leaders could not imprison him, kill him, or even limit his freedom of speech.

These, in my view, are some of the reasons why Muslims were not ordered to fight in those early days of the Prophet's *Da'wah*. Overall, it was a period of training, when particular circumstances provided the groundwork for general principles that could be applied in the future. For example, one particular incident taught the Companions ﷺ the importance of weighing the values of benefits and harms before proceeding to embark on an endeavour. What happened was that the Companions ﷺ cursed the false deities of the Quraish; as a result, the leaders of the Quraish began to curse Allah ﷻ out of ignorance. The Companions ﷺ were doing something good by cursing false deities, but by weighing the benefit of doing that against the consequent harm of the Quraish cursing Allah ﷻ, they were made to realize that they should not curse Quraish's false deities. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيْنًا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

"And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides Allah, lest they insult Allah wrongfully without knowledge. Thus We have made fair-seeming to each people its own doings; then to their Lord is their return and He shall then inform them of all that they used to do." (Qur'an 6: 108)

The overall principle that the Companions ﷺ learned is that, if a correct action leads to a greater harm, then they should not apply that correct action. The people of knowledge have mentioned that that principle applies today as well. So if disbelievers are strong and are not under the authority of a Muslim government, and if it is feared that they will curse Islam, or Allah ﷻ, or the Prophet ﷺ, then it is not permissible for Muslims to curse their gods, their places of worship, or their religion. If a Muslim does any of the above deeds, then it is as if he is encouraging others to perpetrate a sin.

By studying the the Makkan phase of the Prophet's *Da'wah* – which lasted for 13 years – one realizes that, beyond the fact that it was a period of training, Islamic beliefs were of such paramount importance that it was not wise to rush matters. It takes time to first plant the seeds of sound beliefs in people's minds, and then to nurture the growth of those beliefs until they develop strong roots.

Today, Muslims need to learn the same lesson: the overcoming of disbelief and ignorance requires training and patience. The Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ about patience by encouraging them to develop a strong relationship with Allah ﷻ and to find strength through worshipping Him. It was in the Makkan era that these Verses were revealed:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْمُلُ ① قُرْ أَلَيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ② يَصْفَهُ ③ أَوْ أَنْصِ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ④ أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ⑤﴾

“O you wrapped in garments i.e., Prophet Muhammad ﷺ! Stand (to pray) all night, except a little. Half of it, – or a little less than that, Or a little more; and recite the Qur’an (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style.” (Qur’an 73: 1-4)

This Chapter of the Qur’an, *Soorah Al-Muzammil*, impressed upon the Companions ﷺ the importance of standing in the night to pray, of remembering Allah ﷻ constantly, of depending upon Him in all of one’s affairs, of being patient, and of seeking His forgiveness.

In the first few Verses of *Soorah Al-Muzammil*, Allah ﷻ ordered the Prophet ﷺ to dedicate one-half of every night to prayer. And so for approximately one year, the Prophet ﷺ and His Companions ﷺ prayed for one-half – sometimes a little less and sometimes a little more – of every night. After it became evident that the Companions ﷺ were willing to work hard to please Allah ﷻ, and were prepared to obey and execute His commands, Allah ﷻ eased the command to pray at night with the revelation of this Verse:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِنْ ثُلُثَيِ اللَّيْلِ وَنُصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ
وَاللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ عَلِمَ أَن لَّنْ نَّحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكَ فَاقْرَأْ مَا تيسَّرَ مِنَ
الْقُرْآنِ عَلِمَ أَن سَيَكُونُ مِنكُم مَّرْضَىٰ وَآخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِن
فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَآخَرُونَ يَقْتُلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَاقْرَأْ مَا تيسَّرَ مِنْهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَقَرِضُوا لِلَّهِ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا وَمَا نُفْتِيكُم إِلَّا لَأَنفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَحْدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
هُوَ خَيْرٌ وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

“Verily, your Lord knows that you do stand (to pray at night) a little less than two thirds of the night, or half the night, or a third of the night, and so do a party of those with you. And Allah measures the night and the day. He knows that you are unable to pray the whole night, so He has turned to you (in mercy). So, recite you of the Qur’an as much as may be easy for you. He knows that there will be some among you sick, others travelling through the land, seeking of Allah’s Bounty; yet others fighting

in Allah's Cause. So recite as much of the Qur'an as may be easy (for you), and perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat) and give Zakaat, and lend to Allah a goodly loan, and whatever good you send before you for yourselves, (i.e., Nawafil non-obligatory acts of worship: prayers, charity, fasting, Haij and 'Umrah, etc.), you will certainly find it with Allah, better and greater in reward. And seek forgiveness of Allah. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful." (Qur'an 73: 20)

They were being at once tested and trained to ward off sleep. But sleep deprivation was not the aim of that training; rather, the aim was to train the Companions ﷺ to forsake the comforts of life and, more importantly, to resist and overcome their desires. Such a high level of spiritual training was necessary, since Allah ﷻ had chosen the Companions ﷺ for the most important of missions – to bear the message of Islam and to spread it to the far corners of the earth. Many of the early Muslims later went on to play important roles in the great events that took place years later. Much of their successes can be attributed to the fact that their sides would “forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope.” (Qur'an 22: 16) Allah ﷻ described late-night prayer in the following Verse:

﴿إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا ۖ﴾ (٦)

“Verily, the rising by night (for Tahajjud prayer) is very hard and most potent and good for governing (the soul), and most suitable for (understanding) the Word (of Allah).” (Qur'an 73: 6)

Prayer and recitation of the Qur'an have a very potent effect on the soul in the quietness of the night, when other human beings are resting. In the middle of the night, one is not disturbed by the pressing needs and errands of everyday life; one's heart thus becomes free to remember Allah ﷻ and to invoke Him. With such training, the Companions ﷺ were truly prepared to shoulder the duty of spreading the message of Islam. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۝﴾ (٥)

“Verily, We shall send down to you a weighty Word (i.e., obligations, legal laws, etc.).” (Qur’an 73: 5)

That “Weighty Word” is the Noble Qur’an – its teachings, legal laws, commandments, etc. Through the training that the Companions ﷺ underwent, they were later able to form a country in Al-Madeenah, to fight and make sacrifices for the cause of Islam, and to spread Islam to the rest of mankind.

The Companions ﷺ were also being trained to love one another as brothers. As a single unit composed of many brothers in faith, the Companions ﷺ were immune to the psychological attacks of the Quraish. Ties of faith became stronger and more binding than the ties of blood. Islamic brotherhood meant loving one’s brother, hoping for his betterment, and even preferring him to one’s own self. Many of the Prophet’s sayings about the duties of brotherhood had a profoundly positive impact on the Companions ﷺ. In such sayings, the Prophet ﷺ would exhort Muslims to cooperate with one another and to help one another out of difficult situations. But the Prophet ﷺ made it clear that, when they help one another, they should do so, not with the intention of returning a favour or for any other worldly reason, but with the intention of pleasing Allah ﷻ. In a *Qudsee Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ related that Allah ﷻ said, “Those who love one another for My majesty [(i.e., for My sake (will))] have pulpits made of light (in the Hereafter); the Prophets and the martyrs will envy them.”^[1] To love another Muslim for the sake of Allah ﷻ, which is a part of true brotherhood, is one of the best of deeds, and will lead to the highest of rankings in the Hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ warned Muslims not to take the duties of Islamic brotherhood lightly. He ﷺ said, “Do not hate one another, and do not be jealous of one another. And be slaves of Allah, brothers unto one another. And it is not permissible for a Muslim to forsake his brother (i.e., cut off ties with him, by not greeting him

^[1] Related by At-Tirmidhee, who declared it to be authentic in *The Book of Az-Zuhd* (4/51); *Hadeeth* number: 239.

or speaking to him) for more than three nights.”^[1]

Also, from the very beginning of his Prophethood, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made it clear that all of his followers were equals, both rich and poor, nobleman and commoner. He ﷺ taught them that just because people are different from one another in terms of sex, lineage, race, or colour, that in no way means that there should be differences in how people are treated. Before Allah ﷻ, all are equal. This policy of course further strengthened the bonds of brotherhood between Muslims. Conversely, it did not sit well with the nobility of the Quraish, for they demanded from the Prophet ﷺ that, when he ﷺ would meet with them in order to address them, he ﷺ should make a separate gathering for them, one that would be free of slaves and commoners. And of course the Prophet ﷺ refused, for all people equally have the right to be guided. This Verse of the Qur'an was then revealed:

﴿وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ
وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدَ زِينَةَ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن
ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا﴾ (١٨) ﴿

“And keep yourself (O Muhammad ﷺ) patiently with those who call on their Lord (i.e., your companions who remember their Lord with glorification, praising in prayers, etc., and other righteous deeds, etc.) morning and afternoon, seeking His Face, and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, one who follows his own lusts and whose affair (deeds) has been lost.” (Qur'an 18:28)

In another Chapter of the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَطَرَدَهُمْ فَتَكُونُ

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree in the Book of Manners, chapter, “The Hijrah, and the saying of the Messenger of Allah: ‘It is not permissible for a man to forsake his brother for more than three (nights).’” *Hadeeth* number: 6076.

مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

“And turn not away those who invoke their Lord, morning and afternoon seeking His Face. You are accountable for them in nothing, and they are accountable for you in nothing, that you may turn them away, and thus become of the Zaalimoon (unjust).” (Qur’an 6: 52)

Once, when the Prophet ﷺ turned away from Ibn Umm Maktoom ؓ - who was blind - because he ﷺ was busily engaged in a discussion with certain noblemen from the Quraish, Allah ﷻ reproached him, as is related in the following Verses:

﴿عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ۝١ أَن جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ۝٢ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّكَ يُرَىٰ ۝٣ أَن يَذَّكَّرَ فَتَنْفَعَهُ ۝٤ أَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنَىٰ ۝٥ فَأَن تَلَمْ تَصَدَّىٰ ۝٦ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَرْكَبَ ۝٧ وَآمَّا مَن جَاءَكَ يَسْعَىٰ ۝٨ وَهُوَ يُخْتَلَىٰ ۝٩ فَأَن تَعَتَهُ لِّلَهْنَ ۝١٠﴾

“(The Prophet ﷺ) frowned and turned away, because there came to him the blind man (i.e., ‘Abdullah bin Umm-Maktoom, who came to the Prophet ﷺ while he was preaching to one or some of the Quraish chiefs). But what could tell you that per chance he might become pure (from sins)? Or that he might receive admonition, and that the admonition might profit him? As for him who thinks himself self-sufficient, to him you attend; what does it matter to you if he will not become pure (from disbelief, you are only a Messenger, your duty is to convey the Message of Allah). But as to him who came to you running. And is afraid (of Allah and His Punishment). Of him you are neglectful and divert your attention to another.” (Qur’an 80: 1-10)

On the one hand, the bonds of brotherhood were strengthened through a sense of equality; and on the other hand, the Prophet ﷺ consoled poor Muslims by calling upon the rich and strong among his Companions ؓ to help the weak and poor. So united were the Muslims in various ways that the Quraish found no way to sow dissension among them.

The Effect The Noble Qur'an Had In Terms Of Raising The Morale Of The Companions ﷺ

The Companions ﷺ were greatly comforted by the Verses that were being revealed during the Makkan era. This was especially the case in regard to those Verses in which Allah ﷻ defended them, which He ﷻ did in three main ways:

- 1) Allah ﷻ exhorted the Prophet ﷺ to take care of them and to treat them well; He ﷻ even reproached the Prophet ﷺ on certain occasions when he ﷺ would not give attention to some Companions ﷺ because he ﷺ was busy inviting Quraish's nobility to Islam.

The Prophet ﷺ would sit in the *Masjid* alongside his poor or weak Companions ﷺ - among whom were the likes of Khabbaab ﷺ, 'Ammar ﷺ, Ibn Fakeedah Yasaar ﷺ (whose owner was Safwaan ibn Umayyah), and Suhaib ﷺ; meanwhile, the Quraish would mock them, saying to one another, "You know the situation of his Companions (i.e., that they are poor and weak). Is it then these that Allah has bestowed His favour upon from among us with guidance and the truth? Had what Muhammad came with been good, these people would not have beaten us to it, and Allah would not have chosen them instead of us."

Allah ﷻ refuted the mockery of those disbelievers, making it clear to them that His being pleased with His slaves does not hinge upon their degree of wealth or status in this world. And for his part, the Prophet ﷺ made the same point clear, both in his sayings and in his deeds. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَقْرُؤِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَقَةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝٥٢﴾ وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لِيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنِ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَيِّنَاتٍ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ ۝٥٣﴾ وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِحَاثَتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوءًا

يَجْهَلُونَ شَرَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

"And turn not away those who invoke their Lord, morning and afternoon seeking His Face. You are accountable for them in nothing, and they are accountable for you in nothing, that you may turn them away, and thus become of the Zaalimoon (unjust). Thus We have tried some of them with others, that they might say: "Is it these (poor believers) that Allah has favoured from amongst us?" Does not Allah know best those who are grateful? When those who believe in Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) come to you, say: "Salamun 'Alaikum" (peace be on you); your Lord has written Mercy for Himself, so that, if any of you does evil in ignorance, and therefore repents and does righteous good deeds (by obeying Allah), then surely, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Qur'an 6: 52-54)

By ordering the Prophet ﷺ to not turn away from his Companions ﷺ, Allah ﷻ was pointing out their worth, which the disbelievers were ignorant of, or at least feigned to be ignorant of. Furthermore, Allah ﷻ ordered the Prophet ﷺ to extend greetings of peace to them and to inform them of His promise to forgive them their sins after they repent. To be sure, all of this raised the morale of the Companions ﷺ, to the degree that they felt no hurt at the mockery and spiteful words of the Quraish; in fact, they felt content with Quraish's ill-treatment of them, since they knew that that ill-treatment was what caused them to reach such high rankings with their Lord ﷻ.

In Verses that will be recited until the Day of Resurrection, Allah ﷻ reproached His Messenger ﷺ concerning a blind Companion named Ibn Umm Maktoom ﷺ. On only one occasion did the Prophet ﷺ turn away from Ibn Umm Maktoom ﷺ, without answering his question, and even that was because of a sound reason: He ﷺ was busy inviting some of Quraish's nobles to Islam. Even though this occurred only one time, it was sufficient cause for Allah's reproach and the revelation of the following Verses:

﴿عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ۝١ أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ۝٢ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّكَ يَرْبَى ۝٣ أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الْذِكْرَى ۝٤ أَمَّا مَنْ أَسْتَفْزَلَ ۝٥ فَأَنْتَ لَمْ تَصْدَى ۝٦ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا يَرْبَى ۝٧ وَأَمَّا مَنْ جَاءَكَ يَسْعَى ۝٨ وَهُوَ يَحْسَبُ ۝٩ فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ لَهْفَى ۝١٠﴾

“(The Prophet ﷺ) frowned and turned away, because there came to him the blind man (i.e., ‘Abdullah bin Umm-Maktoom, who came to the Prophet ﷺ while he was preaching to one or some of the Quraish chiefs). But what could tell you that per chance he might become pure (from sins)? Or that he might receive admonition, and that the admonition might profit him? As for him who thinks himself self-sufficient, to him you attend; what does it matter to you if he will not become pure (from disbelief, you are only a Messenger, your duty is to convey the Message of Allah). But as to him who came to you running. And is afraid (of Allah and His Punishment), Of him you are neglectful and divert your attention to another.” (Qur’an 80: 1-10)

There is no room in Islam for the preferred treatment of the rich and of the noble classes. Islam came to instill into mankind one view of life and to make clear to them that human beings all come from the same origin, which by extension means that they should be treated equally. With this in mind, we can understand why Allah ﷻ sternly reproached His Messenger ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷻ gave greater attention to Ubai ibn Khalaf than to Ibn Umm Maktoom ﷺ, even though, in all actuality, Ibn Umm Maktoom ﷺ is better than even billions of the likes of Ubai ibn Khalaf – may Allah curse him!

One of the lessons we learn from this story is that it is upon the Daa’ee to convey the truth, but results are not in his control. The Prophet ﷺ strove hard to convince Quraish’s nobles to accept the truth, but even he ﷺ couldn’t control the way in which they responded, for many of them persisted upon the ways of falsehood. This story also establishes the truthfulness of the Messenger of Allah’s Prophethood. For had Muhammad ﷺ not been the Messenger of Allah, he ﷺ would have kept this story a

secret, since in it he ﷺ is sternly reproached. But of course the Prophet ﷺ didn't keep it a secret; instead, he ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ the above-mentioned Verses from Soorah Al-'Abasah, which, he ﷺ knew, will be recited until the Last Day.

- 2) Allah ﷻ consoled the Companions ﷺ by informing them about stories of previous Prophets ﷺ and nations. When the Companions ﷺ read Verses about the ill treatment that the Prophets ﷺ received at the hands of their people and about how the Prophets ﷺ were then patient, they felt that they too should be patient. Being made to feel a sense of brotherhood with Muslims from previous nations, and learning about the hardships they endured, the Companions ﷺ felt comforted. And they thought less of the hardships they were experiencing, knowing fully well that others before them had experienced even more hardships.

Stories in the Qur'an about previous Prophets ﷺ – such as Nooh ﷺ, Ibraaheem ﷺ, Moosa ﷺ, and 'Eesa ﷺ – all had the effect of making the Companions ﷺ firm and strong upon their faith.

- 3) Allah ﷻ praised some of their actions and promised them eternal bliss in Paradise. For example, when Abu Bakr ﷺ freed seven Muslim slaves, Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verses, in which He ﷻ praised Abu Bakr ﷺ and condemned Umayyah ibn Khalaf, the Makkan chieftain who would torture Bilaal ibn Rabaah ﷺ:

﴿فَأَنْذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّى ۝ لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى ۝ الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى ۝ وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى ۝ الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّى ۝ وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ تُجْرَى ۝ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى ۝ وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَى ۝﴾

“Therefore I have warned you of a Fire blazing fiercely (Hell); none shall enter it save the most wretched, who denies and turns away. And Al-Muttaqoon (the pious and righteous) will be far removed from it (Hell). He who spends his wealth for increase in self-purification, and have in his mind no favour from anyone for

which a reward is expected in return, except only the desire to seek the Countenance of his Lord, the Most High. He surely will be pleased (when he will enter Paradise)." (Qur'an 92: 14-21)

In another example, historians^[1] mention that, when the polytheists made fun of Christian delegates from Najraan because they embraced Islam, Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verses:

﴿الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا ءَأَمَّا بِهِ ءِذَا الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ أَوَلَيْكَ يُؤْتُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيَذَرُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَلُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَلُكُمْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبْنِئُ الْجَهْلِيَّينَ ﴿٥٥﴾﴾

"Those to whom We gave the Scripture [i.e., the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel), etc.] before it, – they believe in it (the Qur'an). And when it is recited to them, they say: "We believe in it. Verily, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed even before it we have been from those who submit themselves to Allah in Islam as Muslims (like 'Abdullah bin Salam and Salman Al-Faarisi, etc.). These will be given their reward twice over, because they are patient, and repel evil with good, and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them. And when they hear Al-Laghwa (dirty, false, evil vain talk), they withdraw from it and say: "To us our deeds, and to you your deeds. Peace be to you. We seek not the ignorant." (Qur'an 28: 52-55)

In general, many Verses revealed during the Makkan era promised the Companions ﷺ that, as a reward for their patience and many sacrifices for the cause of Islam, Allah ﷻ will bestow upon them eternal bliss in Paradise. At the same time, Allah ﷻ informed them of the evil destination of their enemies. For example, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Katheer (2/4).

﴿٥١﴾ يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعَذَرُهُمْ وَلَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ ﴿٥٢﴾ ﴿٥١﴾

"Verily, We will indeed make victorious Our Messengers and those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) in this world's life and on the Day when the witnesses will stand forth, (i.e., Day of Resurrection), The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to Zaalimoon (polytheists, wrongdoers, and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). Theirs will be the curse, and theirs will be the evil abode (i.e., painful torment in Hellfire)." (Qur'an 40: 51, 52)

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ praised the Companions ﷺ for adhering closely to the teachings of the Noble Qur'an and for believing in it:

﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَارَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿٣٠﴾ لِيُؤْفِقَهُمُ أَجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ إِنَّهُ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴿٢٩﴾

"Verily, those who recite the Book of Allah (this Qur'an), and perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a (sure) trade-gain that will never perish. That He may pay them their wages in full, and give them (even) more, out of His Grace. Verily! He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (good deeds and to recompense)." (Qur'an 35: 29, 30)

Also, Allah ﷻ praised them for patiently and steadfastly performing worship even while they were being persecuted for doing so. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿١٠﴾ أَمَنَ هُوَ قَانِثٌ ءَانَاءَ أَيْلٍ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١١﴾ قُلْ يَاعِبَادِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَأَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةٌ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّادِقُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿١٢﴾ ﴿١٠﴾

"Is one who is obedient to Allah, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)? Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e., get a lesson from Allah's Signs and Verses). Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "O My slaves who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), be afraid of your Lord (Allah) and keep your duty to Him. Good is (the reward) for those who do good in this world, and Allah's earth is spacious (so if you cannot worship Allah at a place, then go to another)! Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning." (Qur'an 39: 9, 10)

Negotiations

One day, while the leaders of the Quraish were gathered together, one among them said, "See among you who is most knowledgeable regarding magic, soothsaying, and poetry, and then let him go to the man who has divided our ranks, broken up our affair, and found fault with our religion. Let him speak to that man and listen to what he responds." Someone said, "We do not know of anyone (who is better suited to this task) than 'Utbah ibn Rabe'e'ah."

They all agreed, saying, "It is you then, O Abu Al-Waleed (i.e., 'Utbah ibn Rabe'e'ah) [who will go to him (i.e., to the Prophet ﷺ)]." 'Utbah went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Muhammad, who is better: you or 'Abdul-Muttalib?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not respond, and so 'Utbah continued, saying, "If you claim that they (i.e., your forefathers) are better than you, then (you know that) they worshipped the very same gods that you find fault with. And if you claim that you are better than them, then speak, so that we can hear what you have to say. By Allah, we have never seen a lamb that is more unlucky to your people than you are: You have divided our ranks, broken up our affair, found fault with our religion – and you have exposed us among the Arabs, to the degree that it is being said among them, 'Verily,

there is a magician among the Quraish,' and, 'Verily, there is a soothsayer among the Quraish.' By Allah, we will not wait until some of us stand up with swords against others among us, until we all perish. O man, if the only problem is that you are in need (of wealth), we will gather for you our wealth, until you become the richest man among the Quraish. And if all that you desire is marriage, choose any women from the Quraish you want, and we will marry you off to ten (women of your choice)."

Up until this point, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ remained silent, but now he ﷺ said, "Are you done?" 'Utbah said, "Yes." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

﴿حَمَّ ١ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ٢ كِتَابٌ فُصِّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ٣﴾

"Ha-Mim. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings.] A revelation from Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. A Book whereof the Verses are explained in detail; – a Qur'an in Arabic for people who know." (Qur'an 41: 1-3)

And he ﷺ continued to recite until he ﷺ reached this Verse:

﴿فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَقُلْ أَنذَرْتُكُمْ صَاعِقَةً مِّثْلَ صَاعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَثَمُودَ ١٣﴾

"But if they turn away, then say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "I have warned you of a Sa'iqah (a destructive awful cry, torment, hit, a thunderbolt) like the Sa'iqah which overtook 'Ad and Thamood (people)." (Qur'an 41: 13)

'Utbah then said, "That is sufficient for you! You have nothing else with you other than this?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "No," and 'Utbah returned to the other leaders of the Quraish. When he arrived at their gathering, they asked, "What happened?" 'Utbah said, "I said everything I thought you would have said to him." They asked, "And did he answer you?" 'Utbah said, "Yes."^[1]

^[1] Al-Bidaayah An-Nihaayah by Ibn Katheer (3/68, 69).

The following is related in the narration of Ibn Ishaq: When he sat down with them, they said, "What happened, O Abu Al-Waleed?" 'Utbah said, "What happened is that I heard speech that, by Allah, I have not heard the like of ever before. By Allah, it is not poetry; nor is it magic or soothsaying. O people of Quraish, obey me and let me decide on the course of action we should take. Do not stand between this man and that which he is upon. Leave him be. For by Allah, the speech that I heard from him will become great news indeed. If the Arabs get him (with harm or death), then it means that others will have taken care of him for you. But if he is victorious over the Arabs, then his kingdom will be your kingdom, and his honour will be your honour. And of all people, you will be the most highly favoured with him." The rest of the Quraish said: "By Allah, he bewitched you with his words, O Abu Al-Waleed." 'Utbah said, "This is my opinion regarding him, but do as seems most befitting to you."^[1]

Lessons and Morals

- 1) The Prophet ﷺ stayed on course, concentrating on the matter that was of most importance. He ﷺ didn't allow 'Utbah to bring him into a debate regarding a secondary issue: Whether or not he ﷺ was superior to his father and grandfather. Had he ﷺ entered into that debate, the matter would have ended there, and 'Utbah wouldn't have stayed to listen to what the Prophet ﷺ wanted to say. The Prophet ﷺ was concentrating on what was most important, and he ﷺ didn't allow himself to become sidetracked with all of the things that 'Utbah was saying. When 'Utbah was finished speaking, the Prophet ﷺ showed a characteristic display of lofty manners, making sure that it was his turn to speak; he ﷺ said, "Are you done, O Abu Al-Waleed?"
- 2) The Prophet ﷺ did what was required of him given the situation: He ﷺ gave an answer that had an air of finality to it, making it perfectly clear to 'Utbah that nothing he could offer

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/294).

would make him turn his back on his faith. The Prophet's choice of Verses attests to his wisdom, for they are Verses that establish the most important of matters – that the Qur'an is revelation from Allah ﷻ; that the Creator is One, and He is Allah ﷻ; that He ﷻ is the Creator of the heavens and the earth; that previous nations disbelieved and were then destroyed; and that the Quraish were facing, if they did not change their ways, "A *Sa'iqah* (a destructive awful cry, torment, hit, a thunderbolt) like the *Sa'iqah* which overtook (the people of) 'Ad and Thamood."

- 3) Wealth, status, and women – these are three of the greatest dangers that threaten the moral rectitude of a Muslim, but especially of one who invites others to Islam. The downfall of many preachers has been the temptation of wealth. And those that have been tempted by wealth but then remained firm are the true followers of the Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, the temptation of status is dangerous for both the scholar and the *Daa'ee* (one who invites others to Islam). In the face of all temptations, the true follower of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is he who doesn't forget the purpose for which he lives and dies:

﴿قُلْ إِن صَلَائِي وَنُسُكِي وَحَيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَمْ
وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Verily, my *Salaat* (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims." (Qur'an 6: 162, 163)

And as for the temptation of women, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "I have not left after me a temptation (trial or test) that is more harmful to men than women."^[1] This is equally true regarding

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree, in the Book of Marriage; *Hadeeth* number: 5096; and related by Muslim, in the Book of *Ar-Riqaq*; *Hadeeth* number: 2740, 2741.

both the test of a wife who weakens the determination of her husband to preach the message of Islam, and the test of wicked, fallen women who try to ensnare men into their traps by enticing them to fornicate with them. Consider how the Quraish offered the Messenger of Allah ﷺ the choice of marrying any ten women from the Quraish he ﷺ wanted; he could have chosen the best and most beautiful among them to be his wives. But of course the Prophet ﷺ refused. Callers to Islam must follow his example, and they must always keep in mind the following saying of Yousuf ؑ:

﴿قَالَ رَبِّ الْمَسْجِنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدْعُونَنِي إِلَيْهِ وَإِلَّا تَصْرِفْ عَنِّي كَيْدَهُنَّ أَصْبُ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَكُن مِّنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ۖ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ فَصَرَفَ عَنْهُ كَيْدَهُنَّ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝٣٤﴾

"He said : "O my Lord! Prison is more to my liking than that to which they invite me . Unless You turn away their plot from me , I will feel inclined towards them and be one (of those who commit sin and deserve blame or those who do deeds) of the ignorants." So his Lord answered his invocation and turned away from him their plot. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower."
(Qur'an 12: 33, 34)

- 4) Despite his arrogance, 'Utbah acknowledged the beauty of the Qur'an and the greatness of the Prophet's message. While the other polytheists wanted to bring an end to the Prophet's Da'wah, 'Utbah wanted to do the opposite, not because he believed, but because he saw a worldly benefit in leaving the Prophet ﷺ alone.
- 5) The Companions ؓ were listening to the conversation that took place between the Prophet ﷺ and 'Utbah. They witnessed firsthand how the Prophet ﷺ refused all of the enticing things that were being offered to him. And of course they learned the most valuable of lessons: That no matter what the temptation, one must remain firm upon one's principles and beliefs.
- 6) The Companions ؓ also learned a lesson about patience and

forbearance. The Prophet ﷺ remained both quiet and patient while 'Utbah continued to hurl invective upon him. Instead of responding in like manner to the personal attacks that 'Utbah leveled against him, the Prophet ﷺ remained calm and did his duty by inviting 'Utbah to Islam, showing us that in every action and saying of his, there is an ideal example for us to follow.

Some *Seerah* books mention that, after the above-mentioned incident occurred, the leaders of the Quraish made subsequent attempts to negotiate terms with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Throughout such efforts, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ remained steadfast and firm, establishing an important precedent for all Muslims from future generations: In no way whatsoever may one make a compromise in one's beliefs. On one occasion, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ responded to Quraish's offers by saying, "I want nothing from what you say. I have not come to you with that which I bring to you in order to seek out your wealth, status among you, or kingship over you. To the contrary, Allah ﷻ has sent me to you as a Messenger. He ﷻ has sent down a Book to me and has ordered me to be a bearer of glad tidings and a warner to you. I have indeed conveyed to you the message of my Lord, and I have advised you sincerely. If you accept from me what I have brought you (i.e., the message of Islam), then that (action of yours) will give you your share in this world and the Hereafter. If you reject it from me, then I will be patient for Allah's command, until Allah judges between me and you."

When the leaders of the Quraish had sufficiently witnessed the patience and steadfastness of the Muslims, they began to lose hope, fearing that their tribe had become irreversibly divided. But they were still deluded enough into thinking that their flexibility regarding their beliefs would rub off on their enemies. And so they sent a delegation to the Prophet ﷺ, which consisted of Al-Aswad ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib, Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, and Al-'Aas ibn Waail. They said, "O Muhammad, come and let us worship that which you worship, and let you worship that which we worship. Let us become

partners in this affair. If that which you worship is better than that which we worship, then we will have taken our share from Him (i.e., we will have achieved our share of worshipping Him). And if that which we worship is better than that which you worship, then you will have taken your share of him (i.e., them: their false deities).” Allah ﷻ then revealed these Verses:

﴿قُلْ يَتَّيِبُوا الْكَافِرُونَ ۝ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ۝ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ۝ لَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ ۝ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ۝ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ۝﴾

“Say: (O Muhammad ﷺ) to these Mushrikoon and Kaafiroon): a “O Al-Kaafiroon (disbelievers in Allah, in His Oneness, in His angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar, etc.)! I worship not that which you worship, nor will you worship that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which you are worshipping. Nor will you worship that which I worship. To you be your religion, and to me my religion (Islamic Monotheism).” (Qur’an 109: 1-6)

There are other Verses of the Qur’an that are similar to this chapter in meaning. For example, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ لِي عَمَلِي وَلَكُمْ عَمَلُكُمْ أَنْتُمْ بَرِيءُونَ مِمَّا أَعْمَلُ وَأَنَا بِرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝﴾

“And if they deny you, say: “For me are my deeds and for you are your deeds! You are innocent of what I do, and I am innocent of what you do!” (Qur’an 10: 41)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ إِنِّي نُهَيْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قُلْ لَا أَنْبَأُكُمْ بِأَهْوَاءِكُمْ ۝ قَدْ ضَلَلْتُ إِذَا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ۝ قُلْ إِنِّي عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّي وَكَذَّبْتُمْ بِهِ ۝ مَا عِنْدِي مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِهِ ۝ إِنْ الْإِلَهِ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَقُصُّ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ خَبِيرُ الْغُصُوبِ ۝﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): ‘I have been forbidden to worship those whom you invoke (worship) besides Allah.’ Say: ‘I will not follow your vain desires. If I did, I would go astray, and I would not be one of the rightly guided.’ Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): ‘I am on clear proof from my Lord (Islamic Monotheism), but you deny (the truth that has come to me from Allah). I have not gotten what you are asking for impatiently (the torment). The decision is only for Allah, He declares the truth, and He is the Best of judges.’”
 (Qur’an 6: 56, 57)

Soorah Al-Kaafiroon stressed, emphasized, and then repeatedly reemphasized the point that the path of the truth is one; it is straight and has no crookedness in it; it is the path of worshipping Allah ﷻ alone, without associating any partner whatsoever with Him. Allah ﷻ made it clear to the polytheists that there is no middle ground or meeting point between the truth and falsehood, between light and darkness; the difference is fundamental and complete. The reality of Islam is not as the hypocrites of today say: “Religion is for Allah, and our homeland is for everyone.” In all times and places, ignorance is ignorance, and Islam is Islam; to go from ignorance to Islam one has to dispense with ignorance completely, both in worship and in the laws by which one lives. Otherwise, “To you be your religion, and to me my religion (Islamic Monotheism).”

After the previous group of delegates failed in their attempt to negotiate terms with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Quraish sent another delegation, which consisted of ‘Abdullah ibn Abee Umayyah, Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, Mukraz ibn Hafs, ‘Amr ibn ‘Abdullah Abee Qais, and Al-‘Aas ibn Waail. The delegates were for the most part different, and so was the offer they were coming with. They didn’t ask the Prophet ﷺ to stop teaching the Qur’an; they only asked that he ﷺ remove from the Qur’an those Verses that made them angry – particularly those Verses that disparaged their gods. Allah ﷻ sent down a clear and decisive answer to their request:

﴿وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا آتِنَا بِشُرَءٍ غَيْرِ هَذَا أَوْ بَدِّلْهُ قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُ مِنْ تِلْقَائِي نَفْسِي إِنْ أَتَيْتُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَى إِلَيَّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابٌ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾ (١٥)

"And when Our Clear Verses are recited unto them, those who hope not for their meeting with Us, say : Bring us a Qur'an other than this, or change it. Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) : "It is not for me to change it on my own accord ; I only follow that which is revealed unto me. Verily, I fear if I were to disobey my Lord, the torment of the Great Day (i.e., the Day of Resurrection)." (Qur'an 10: 15)

By sending such delegations, the Quraish were indicating just how desperate they were, and how much willing they were to make compromises regarding their own religion. It is interesting to note how they went from bigger demands to lesser demands with each subsequent visit. In the first visit, they asked the Prophet ﷺ to altogether forsake his religion. But in the second visit, they asked for a smaller compromise. Also, with the exception of Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, the second group of delegates consisted of altogether different people. They were hoping that, by using a variety of minds and styles of argument, they would have a better chance of convincing the Prophet ﷺ to accept their terms.

In this story there is an important lesson for scholars and preachers from all generations: One must not compromise the teachings of Islam, not even regarding a seemingly small matter. Scholars and preachers today need to be especially careful in responding to the offers that are made to them, since the enemies of Islam are getting smarter and are resorting to more indirect means to entice well-known Islamic personalities away from the important mission of inviting people to Islam. Richard B. Mitchell, a Western man of influence in the Middle East, put together a

report in which he made suggestions of how to weaken Islamic movements in an indirect manner. One suggestion he made was to entice scholars and preachers to take seemingly important, high-paying jobs in order to keep them away from the masses, and in order to keep them occupied with Islamic projects that have no substantial impact on real life events and that will take up all of their energies. Another suggestion he made was to offer lucrative partnerships to Muslim businessmen in Muslim countries; the businesses that they would be entering would bring them substantial profits, but would involve those kinds of projects that work to promote the goals of the enemies of Islam. Both of his suggestions involved indirect compromises made by Muslims. And when one studies the situation of the Islamic world, one finds that the said suggestions and other similarly insidious plans are quietly being executed without anyone being the wiser about the situation. Indeed, we belong to Allah, and to Him is our return!

Debating The Polytheists

The Prophet ﷺ came with clear proofs to establish the truthfulness of his message; furthermore, he ﷺ would choose the most opportune moments to present those proofs and convey his message. When he ﷺ did find opportunities to present Islam to the people of the Quraish, he ﷺ used various approaches to convince them of the truth, approaches that are mentioned or implied in the Noble Qur'an. Among the approaches he ﷺ used are the following:

1) Comparison

The Prophet ﷺ would present two matters, one that was desirable and good, and the other that was reprehensible and evil. He ﷺ wanted to stimulate the other person into thinking about both matters and their respective consequences, so that that person would then prefer what is good – i.e., Islam – and follow it. Allah ﷻ said:

أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ
مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

"Is he who was dead (without faith by ignorance and disbelief) and We gave him life (by knowledge and faith) and set for him a light (of belief) whereby he can walk amongst men, like him who is in the darkness (of disbelief, polytheism and hypocrisy) from which he can never come out? Thus it is made fair-seeming to the disbelievers that which they used to do." (Qur'an 6: 122)

Ibn Katheer said in his *Tafseer*, "This is an example that Allah has set forth for the believer who previously had been dead, or in other words, had been misguided, destroyed (through his misguidance), and confused. Allah ﷻ then gave him life, which means that Allah ﷻ gave life to his heart through Eemaan (faith) and guided him to follow His Messengers."

2) Forcing an Admission

In this approach, one is forced into thinking about possible truths and then, after a process of rejecting from them what is false, admitting the actual truth. This approach is used in the following Verses:

﴿أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَلْ لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَيْكِ أَمْ هُمُ الْمُصْطَرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَمْ لَهُمْ سَامٌ سَمِعُوا فِيهِ فَلَيَاتِ مُسْتَعِمْهُمْ بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ أَمْ لَهُ الْبَنَاتُ وَلَكُمُ الْبَنُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُمْ مِنْ مَغْرَمٍ مُثْقَلُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ أَمْ عِنْدَهُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ أَمْ يُرِيدُونَ كَيْدًا فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هُمُ الْمَكِيدُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ أَمْ هُمُ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كِسْفًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ سَاقِطًا يَقُولُوا سَحَابٌ مَرْكُومٌ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَذَرَهُمْ حَتَّى يَلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي فِيهِ يُصْعَقُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

"Were they created by nothing, or were they themselves the creators? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no firm belief. Or are with them the treasures of your Lord? Or are they the tyrants with the authority to do as they like? Or have they a stairway (to heaven), by means of which they listen (to the talks of the angels)? Then let their listener produce some manifest proof. Or has He (Allah) only daughters and you have sons? Or is it that you (O Muhammad ﷺ) ask a wage from them (for your preaching of Islamic Monotheism) so that they are burdened with a load of debt? Or that the Ghaib (unseen) is with them, and they write it down? Or do they intend a plot (against you, O Muhammad ﷺ)? But those who disbelieve (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) are themselves in a plot! Or have they an ilah (a god) other than Allah? Glorified be Allah from all that they ascribe as partners (to Him). And if they were to see a piece of the heaven falling down, they would say: "Clouds gathered in heaps!" So leave them alone till they meet their Day, in which they will sink into a fainting (with horror)." (Qur'an 52: 35-45)

Ibn Katheer said in his *Tafseer*, "Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمْ الْخَالِقُونَ﴾ (٣٥)

"Were they created by nothing, or were they themselves the creators?" (Qur'an 52: 35)

This Verse involves two questions: 1) Did they come into existence without a creator? 2) Or did they create themselves? The answer to both questions is of course, no; rather, it was Allah ﷻ Who created them and brought them into being after they had been non-existent."

The first of the above-mentioned Verses consists of a very powerful logical argument, since the inherent logic that man is endowed with rejects the idea that he was created without a creator; or in other words, every person intrinsically knows that a creator brought him into being. As for the second question mentioned above, no person of sound mind claims that he has

created himself. The only possible logical conclusion that remains is the truth: Allah ﷻ is the Creator of all that exists, and He has no partner.

As-Sa'dee said in his *Tafseer*, "This proof that is used against them (i.e., the polytheists) leaves them with no choice other than to submit to the truth, or to cast off the logical conclusions of the mind... Polytheists reject the Oneness of Allah and disbelieve in His Messenger ﷺ. What this implies is that they deny the fact that Allah ﷻ created them. It is an established fact in the mind and in the religion that there are only three possible realities: 1) Either they were created out of nothing, which means that there is no creator who created them, and this is impossibility itself; 2) Or they created themselves, and this too is impossible, for one cannot even imagine that one has created one's own self; and if these two are false and are established as being impossible, then the third possible reality is necessarily true: 3) That Allah ﷻ is the One Who created them. That being the sole possible truth, one consequently knows, therefore, that Allah ﷻ alone deserves to be worshipped and that worship is only sound and correct when it is performed for Allah ﷻ alone."

3) Ignoring secondary arguments

Sometimes, when one is arguing with an arrogant, stubborn person, one does well by not responding to some of his arguments. Rather than enter into an endless debate, one should concentrate on what is of primary importance and on refuting main points rather than secondary ones. One particular discussion between Moosa ﷺ and Fir'aun exemplifies this approach. Moosa ﷺ did not respond to most of what Fir'aun had said to him, but instead concentrated on refuting Fir'aun's claim of godhood. An account of this debate is related in Verses from *Soorah Ash-Shu'araa*, in which Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ (٢٣) قَالَ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ إِن كُنتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ ۝ (٢٤) قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُ أَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ ۝ (٢٥) قَالَ رَبِّكُمْ رَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾

﴿٢٦﴾ قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمْ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قَالَ لَئِن أَخَذَتْ إِلَهًا غَيْرِي لَأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ الْمَسْجُودِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

"Fir'aun (Pharaoh) said: "And what is the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)?" Moosa (Moses) said: "Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, if you seek to be convinced with certainty." Fir'aun (Pharaoh) said to those around: "Do you not hear (what he says)?" Moosa (Moses) said: "Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!" Fir'aun (Pharaoh) said: "Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman!" Moosa (Moses) said: "Lord of the east and the west, and all that is between them, if you did but understand!" Fir'aun (Pharaoh) said: "If you choose an ilah (god) other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners." (Qur'an 26: 23-29)

It was based on the principles of these and other Verses of the Qur'an that the Prophet ﷺ debated the polytheists of the Quraish. When the Prophet ﷺ established clear proofs to the Quraish, they became confused, not knowing how to respond. Overcome by clear and logical arguments, they disbelieved, not because they inwardly disbelieved in the Prophet ﷺ, but because they were stubborn and intransigent. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لَيَحْزَنُكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَكْذِبُونَكَ وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ يَحْجِدُونَ﴾ ﴿٣٣﴾

"We know indeed the grief which their words cause you (O Muhammad ﷺ): it is not you that they deny, but it is the Verses (the Qur'an) of Allah that the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers) deny." (Qur'an 6: 33)

Due to their perverse way of thinking, they made unreasonable requests to the Prophet ﷺ. By making such requests, which involved the performance of great miracles, they were not trying

to ascertain the truthfulness of the Prophet ﷺ, for they already inwardly knew that he ﷺ was indeed truthful. They were simply making requests which they felt the Prophet ﷺ would not fulfill, for that would give them the opportunity to give forth a reason to disbelieve in him. These were some of the requests they made:

- ◆ They asked the Prophet ﷺ to “cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us.” Given that they lived in a dry desert and depended on water deep below the ground, they asked the Prophet ﷺ to cause springs to flow above ground level.
- ◆ They requested that the Prophet ﷺ have “a garden of date-palms and grapes” and that rivers gush forth in the midst of that garden.
- ◆ One of the miracles they asked for involved their own destruction. They asked the Prophet ﷺ to “cause the heaven to fall upon us in pieces,” which will in fact occur on the Day of Resurrection.
- ◆ They asked the Prophet ﷺ to “bring Allah and the angels before (us) face to face.”
- ◆ They requested from the Prophet ﷺ that he have a house made of adornable materials – which refers to gold.
- ◆ They asked him to ascend up into the sky.
- ◆ They asked him to bring down a Book for them to read. Explaining this request, Mujaahid said, “This means that they were asking for a book to be sent down to each one of them. Each book would say, ‘This is a Book from Allah to so-and-so, son of so-and-so.’ And they wanted it to be placed beside the head of each one of them.”^[1]
- ◆ They asked the Prophet ﷺ to make mountains move and to make the earth be cloven asunder. And they asked him to raise their fathers from the dead.

^[1] Refer to *Al-Mu’awwiqoon Lid-Da’wah Al-Islaamiyyah* by Dr. Sameerah Muhammad, pgs. 171, 172.

Throughout history, people have asked Prophets ﷺ to perform miracles. And although he ardently wanted his people to embrace Islam, the Prophet ﷺ refused to fulfill such requests from his people. He ﷺ did so because he knew that – like what happened to previous peoples – if the Quraish were to still disbelieve after miracles were shown to them, then they would be punished with a severe torment. And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ knew that the Quraish were asking for miracles, not out of a desire to be convinced of the truth, but out of a perverse desire to give an excuse not to believe. In response to their requests, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “It is not with this (the miracles of which you ask) that I have been sent to you. I came to you from Allah, bringing with me only that which Allah sent me with. And I have indeed conveyed to you that which I have been sent with. If you accept what I have been sent with, then that is your share in this world and the Hereafter (i.e., you will get your share of good reward in both worlds). And if you reject it from me, I will be patient for the command of Allah ﷻ, until Allah judges between me and you.”^[1]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then returned to his family, feeling sad on account of the attitude of Quraish’s leaders. Allah ﷻ related these events in the following Verses:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَكَ حَتَّى تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَنْبُوعًا ۖ أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّجِيلٍ وَعِنَبٍ فَتُفَجَّرَ الْأَنْهَارُ خِلَالَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ۚ أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا رَعِمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا أَوْ تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ فَبَيِّنًا ۚ أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِّنْ زُخْرِفٍ أَوْ تَرْقَىٰ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لِرَفِيقِكَ حَتَّىٰ تُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَابًا يَقْرَوُهُ قُلُوبُ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَسُولًا ۖ ۝٩٣ وَمَا مَعَ النَّاسِ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ بَشَرًا رَسُولًا ۖ ۝٩٤ قُلْ لَوْ كُنَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَلَائِكَةً يَّمْشُونَ مُطْمَئِنِّينَ لَنُزِّلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَلَكًا رَسُولًا ۖ ۝٩٥ قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا بَصِيرًا ۝٩٦﴾

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/495).

"And they say: "We shall not believe in you (O Muhammad ﷺ), until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us. 'Or you have a garden of date-palms and grapes, and cause rivers to gush forth in their midst abundantly. "Or you cause the heaven to fall upon us in pieces, as you have pretended, or you bring Allah and the angels before (us) face to face. "Or you have a house of adornable materials (like silver and pure gold, etc.), or you ascend up into the sky, and even then we will put no faith in your ascension until you bring down for us a Book that we would read." Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Glorified (and Exalted) be my Lord (Allah) above all that evil they (polytheists) associate with Him! Am I anything but a man, sent as a Messenger?" And nothing prevented men from believing when the guidance came to them, except that they said: "Has Allah sent a man as (His) Messenger?" Say: "If there were on the earth, angels walking about in peace and security, We should certainly have sent down for them from the heaven an angel as a Messenger." Say: "Sufficient is Allah for a witness between me and you. Verily! He is the All-Knower, the All-Seer of His slaves." (Qur'an 17: 90-96)

And these Verses were also revealed:

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْآنًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِعَتْ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ أَوْ كَلِمٌ بِهِ الْمَوْتُ بَلَّ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ جَمِيعًا أَفَلَمْ يَأْتِ الْذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَن لَّوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَهْدَى النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تُصِيبُهُم بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيبًا مِّن دَارِهِمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ وَعْدُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ﴿٣١﴾﴾

"And if there had been a Qur'an with which mountains could be moved (from their places), or the earth could be cloven asunder, or the dead could be made to speak (it would not have been other than this Qur'an). But the decision of all things is certainly with Allah. Have not then those who believe yet known that had Allah willed, He could have guided all mankind? And a disaster will not cease to strike those who disbelieve because of their (evil) deeds or it (i.e., the disaster) settle close to their homes, until the

Promise of Allah comes to pass. Certainly, Allah does not fail in His Promise.” (Qur’an 13: 31)

Again, the reason why they were not granted the miracles they asked for is that they didn’t ask sincerely, out of a desire to ascertain the truth; rather, they asked arrogantly and mockingly, hoping to put down Islam and the Prophet ﷺ. Allah ﷻ of course knew that even if they witnessed firsthand the miracles they asked for, they still wouldn’t believe. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَنِهِمْ إِنِ جَاءَهُمْ آيَةٌ لَّيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَا إِذَا جَاءَتْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝١٠٩ وَنُقَلِّبُ أَقْسَادَهُمْ وَابْصِرَهُمْ كَمَا لَوْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ ۚ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ۝١١٠﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَهُمُ الْمَلَكُوكَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا مَا كَانُوا لَيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَٰكِن أَكْثَرُهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ۝١١١﴾

“And they swear their strongest oaths by Allah, that if there came to them a sign, they would surely believe therein. Say: “Signs are but with Allah and what will make you (Muslims) perceive that (even) if it (the sign) came, they will not believe?” And We shall turn their hearts and their eyes away (from guidance), as they refused to believe therein for the first time, and We shall leave them in their trespass to wander blindly. And even if We had sent down unto them angels, and the dead had spoken unto them, and We had gathered together all things before their very eyes, they would not have believed, unless Allah willed, but most of them behave ignorantly.” (Qur’an 6: 109-111)

By not granting them their requests, Allah ﷻ was showing mercy to the Quraish, for one of His *Sunan* (ways, laws) regarding the creation is that if a people ask for a miracle, are granted it, but then still disbelieve, Allah ﷻ punishes them with complete destruction, which is what He ﷻ did with ‘Ad, Thamood, and the people of Fir’aun. Nothing proves more conclusively the lack of sincerity and seriousness on the part of the Quraish than the fact

that they had with them the Qur'an, the clearest of miracles. Therefore, when they asked for miracles, Allah ﷻ answered them with the following Verses:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَذِكْرَى لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قُلْ كَفَى بِاللَّهِ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ شَهِيدًا يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْبَاطِلِ وَكَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾﴾

“And they say: “Why are not signs sent down to him from his Lord?” Say: “The signs are only with Allah, and I am only a plain warner.” Is it not sufficient for them that We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) which is recited to them? Verily, herein is mercy and a reminder (or an admonition) for a people who believe. Say (to them O Muhammad ﷺ): “Sufficient is Allah for a witness between me and you. He knows what is in the heavens and on earth.” And those who believe in Batil (all false deities other than Allah), and disbelieve in Allah and (in His Oneness), it is they who are the losers.” (Qur'an 29: 50-52)

According to a narration that is related by 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbaas رضي الله عنه, the leaders of the Quraish once said to the Prophet ﷺ, “On our behalf, invoke your Lord to turn As-Safaa (a mountain in Makkah) into gold for us, and we will then believe in you.” The Prophet ﷺ asked, “Will you indeed do so?” They said, “Yes,” and so the Prophet ﷺ invoked Allah ﷻ to fulfill their request. Jibreel عليه السلام then came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “Verily, your Lord – 'Azza wa Jall (the Possessor of might and majesty) – sends As-Salaam (peace) upon you and says, ‘If you want, As-Safaa will turn into gold for them. After that, whosoever among them disbelieves, I will punish with a punishment that is so severe that I will not punish with it anyone else from all that exists. And (i.e., or) if you wish, I will open for them the doors of repentance and mercy.’” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Rather, (I choose) the door (s) of

repentance and mercy." Allah ﷻ then revealed this Verse:

﴿وَمَا مَنَعَنَا أَنْ نُرْسِلَ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا أَنْ كَذَّبَ بِهَا الْأَوَّلُونَ ۖ وَإِنَّا نَمُودُ
الْآفَاقَ مُبْصِرَةً ۖ فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا ۖ وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا تَخْوِيفًا ۝٥٩﴾

"And nothing stops Us from sending the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, signs) but that the people of old denied them. And We sent the she-camel to Thamood as a clear sign, but they did her wrong. And We sent not the signs except to warn, and to make them afraid (of destruction)." (Qur'an 17: 59)

In asking for miracles, the leaders of the Quraish were actually plotting against Islam. Hoping that the Prophet ﷺ would not give them the miracles they requested, they wanted to inform other tribes about his refusal, and thus deter them from embracing Islam. And they made it clear that, even if their requests were granted, they still wouldn't believe. All they wanted was to make the Prophet ﷺ look weak in order to discredit him and prevent others from following him.

The Role The Jews Played During The Makkan Era Of The Prophet's Biography

The Qur'an discusses the Jews, or the Children of Israel, in more detail than it does the people of any other nation. And though the Jews played an important role only during the Madanee era of the Prophet's biography, about 50 Makkan Verses of the Qur'an make some mention of their history. Each particular Verse about the Jews was suitable to the specific phase of *Da'wah* that the Prophet ﷺ had reached at the time. In Makkan Verses of the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ reminds Muslims that the disbelief of the Quraish was not something new; rather, the people of previous nations – such as 'Ad, Thamood, Fir'aun, the Children of Israel, the people of Tubba', and the people of Ar-Rass – also disbelieved and harmed the Prophets ﷺ that were sent to them. Consider, for instance, the following Verses from *Soorah Al-Muzammil*, which was, in terms of chronological order, the third Chapter of the Qur'an to be

revealed to the Prophet ﷺ:

﴿إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ۖ فَعَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ الرَّسُولَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُ أَخَذًا وَبِيلًا ۚ فَكَيْفَ تَنْفَوْنَ إِن كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ شِيبًا ۚ ۝٧ السَّمَاءُ مَنْفُطِرٌ بِهٖ ۖ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَفْعُولًا ۚ ۝٨ إِنَّ هَٰذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ ۖ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ۝١٩﴾

“Verily, We have sent to you (O men) a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) to be a witness over you, as We did send a Messenger [Moosa (Moses)] to Fir’aun (Pharaoh). But Fir’aun (Pharaoh) disobeyed the Messenger (Moses), so We seized him with a severe punishment. Then how can you avoid the punishment, if you disbelieve, on a day that will make the children grey-headed (i.e., the Day of Resurrection)? Whereon the heaven will be cleft asunder? His Promise is certainly to be accomplished. Verily, this is an admonition, therefore, whosoever will, let him take a Path to His Lord!” (Qur’an 73: 15-19)

Another example is Soorah Al-‘A’laa, which, again in terms of chronological order, was the eighth chapter of the Qur’an to be revealed to the Prophet ﷺ. After mentioning some of His Glorious and Majestic qualities, after reminding His slaves of the many blessings that He ﷻ has bestowed upon them, after pointing out the way to success in this life, and after making it clear that the Hereafter is better and more everlasting, Allah ﷻ ended the Chapter with His Saying:

﴿إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَىٰ ۝٨ صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ ۝١٩﴾

“Verily! This is in the former Scriptures, the Scriptures of Ibraaheem (Abraham) and Moosa (Moses) ﷺ.” (Qur’an 87: 18, 19)

And in Soorah Al-Fajr, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ ۖ ۝١ إِرْمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ ۖ ۝٧ الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْنِ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ ۖ ۝٨ وَتَمُودَ الَّذِي جَاءُوا الصَّخَرَ بِالْوَادِ ۖ ۝٩ وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْدَادِ ۖ ۝١٠ الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا

فِي الْبَلَدِ ۝ فَكَثُرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ ۝ فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ ۝ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبَازِلٌ مُّصَادٍ ۝ ﴿١٤﴾

“Did you (O Muhammad ﷺ) not see (thought) how your Lord dealt with ‘Ad (people)? Who were very tall like lofty pillars, the like of which were not created in the land? And (with) Thamood (people), who cut (hewed) out rocks in the valley (to make dwellings)? And (with) Fir’aun (Pharaoh), who had pegs (who used to torture men by binding them to pegs)? Who did transgress beyond bounds in the lands (in the disobedience of Allah). And made therein much mischief. So your Lord poured on them different kinds of severe torment. Verily, your Lord is Ever Watchful (over them).” (Qur’an 89: 6-14)

As an instance of human beings who are persecuted and tested in life, the Children of Israel are discussed in Soorah An-Najm. Some among them failed by deviating from the truth, and yet others among them succeeded by remaining steadfast upon the truth. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَاعْرِضْ عَنْ مَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ۝ ذَٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اهْتَدَىٰ ۝ ۝ وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْتَوُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ۝ ۝ الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَثِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشِ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنْتُمْ أَجْنَةُ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ ۝ ۝ أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي تَوَلَّىٰ ۝ ۝ وَأَعْطَىٰ قَلِيلًا وَأَكْدَىٰ ۝ ۝ أَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ فَهُوَ بِرَىٰ ۝ ۝ أَمْ لَمْ يُبْنَأْ بِمَا فِي صُحُفٍ مُّوسَىٰ ۝ ۝ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّىٰ ۝ ۝ أَلَا نَزَّلْنَا وَزَرَ ۝ ۝ وَزَرَ ۝ ۝ أَلَمْ يَجْزِهِ ۝ ۝ وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ۝ ۝ وَأَنْ سَعِيَهُمْ سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ۝ ۝ ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءَ الْأَوَّلَىٰ ۝ ۝ وَأَنْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ۝ ۝﴾ ﴿٤٦﴾

“Therefore withdraw (O Muhammad ﷺ) from him who turns away from Our Reminder (this Qur’an) and desires nothing but

the life of this world. That is what they could reach of knowledge. Verily, your Lord it is He Who knows best him who goes astray from His Path, and he knows best him who receives guidance. And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, that He may requite those who do evil with that which they have done (i.e., punish them in Hell), and reward those who do good, with what is best (i.e., Paradise). Those who avoid great sins and Al-Fawahish (illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) except the small faults, – Verily, your Lord is of Vast Forgiveness. He knows you well when He created you from the earth (Adam), and when you were fetuses in your mothers' wombs. So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears Allah and keep his duty to Him [i.e., those who are Al-Muttaqoon (pious)]. Did you (O Muhammad ﷺ) observe him who turned away (from Islam). And gave a little, then stopped (giving)? Is with him the knowledge of the unseen so that he sees? Or is he not informed with what is in the Pages (Scripture) of Moosa (Moses), and of Ibraaheem (Abraham) who fulfilled (or conveyed) all that (what Allah ordered him to do or convey), that no burdened person (with sins) shall bear the burden (sins) of another, and that man can have nothing but what he does (good or bad), and that his deeds will be seen. Then he will be recompensed with a full and the best recompense. And that to your Lord (Allah) is the End (Return of everything).” (Qur’an 53: 29-42)

The principles outlined at the end of these Verses were previously established in the Scriptures of Moosa ﷺ and Ibraaheem ﷺ. Moosa ﷺ was sent to the Children of Israel, so, in these Verses, it was being suggested to the Jews that they should return to their scriptures if they are in doubt about the Prophet ﷺ, for the truth in those Scriptures – before they were distorted at the hands of the Children of Israel – and the Qur’an is one. And the mention of the scrolls of Ibraaheem ﷺ is significant because the Quraish knew that they were descended from Ibraaheem ﷺ, and they claimed to honour him by upholding the rites they inherited from him – such as maintaining the Ka’bah and serving pilgrims.

In Chapters *Sad*, *Yaa-Seen*, *Maryam*, and, *Taa-Haa*, stories are mentioned of how Prophets ﷺ were mistreated at the hands of their people. For example, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿جُنْدٌ مَّا هُنَالِكَ مَهْزُومٌ مِّنَ الْأَحْزَابِ ۝۱۱ كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ ذُو الْأَوْنَادِ ۝۱۲ وَثَمُودُ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ وَأَصْحَبُ لَيْكَةِ الْأَحْزَابِ ۝۱۳﴾ إِنَّ كُلَّ إِلَّا كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ عِقَابِ ۝۱۴ وَمَا يَنْظُرُ هَؤُلَاءِ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً مَّا لَهَا مِن فَوْاقِ ۝۱۵ وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا عَجَلْ لَّنَا قِطْنًا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ۝۱۶ أَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَادْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُدَ ذَا الْأَيْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ۝۱۷﴾

“(As they denied Allah’s Message) they will be a defeated host like the confederates of the old times (who were defeated). Before them (were many who) belied Messengers, – the people of Nooh (Noah); and ‘Ad; and Fir’aun (Pharaoh) – the man of stakes (with which he used to punish the people), And Thamood, and the people of Loot (Lot), and the dwellers of the wood; such were the confederates. Not one of them but belied the Messengers, therefore my Torment was justified. And these only wait for a single Saihah [shout (i.e., the blowing of the trumpet by the angel Israfil)] there will be no pause or ending thereto [till everything will perish except Allah (the only God full of majesty, Bounty and Honour)]. They say: “Our Lord! Hasten to us Qittana (i.e. our Record of good and bad deeds so that we may see it) before the Day of Reckoning!” Be patient (O Muhammad ﷺ) of what they say, and remember Our slave Daawood (David), endued with power. Verily, he was ever oft-returning in all matters and in repentance (towards Allah).” (Qur’an 38: 11-17)

Not a single Prophet ﷺ was saved from being harmed, no matter how honoured and respected a given Prophet ﷺ was among his people. Nooh ﷺ, Hood ﷺ, Moosa ﷺ, Saaleh ﷺ, Loot ﷺ, Shu’aib ﷺ were all common members of their respective societies, and they were all persecuted and harmed. But so was Daawood ﷺ, who was a powerful king, and whose miracles were witnessed firsthand by his people – for example, mountains

glorified Allah ﷻ with him, and birds were brought to life so that they could hear his recitation. What, then, did the Children of Israel write about him? They ascribed many evil actions to him in their writings, though, in reality, he was a pious worshipper. Similarly, they ascribed evil to Maryam ؑ. Allah ﷻ related to us the miraculous nature of her pregnancy and delivery. He ﷻ also mentioned the miracles that took place for both her ؑ and her son, 'Eesa ؑ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَىٰ هَٰئِنٌ وَلَنَجْعَلَنَّ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا ۝﴾

“He said: “So (it will be), your Lord said: ‘That is easy for Me (Allah): And (We wish) to appoint him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from us (Allah), and it is a matter (already) decreed (by Allah).’” (Qur’an 19: 21)

If that was the attitude of the People of the Book – people who had in their hands the Torah, a revealed book from Allah ﷻ – then it is no surprise that the Quraish answered the Prophet’s invitation to embrace the truth with disbelief.

The Children of Israel even mistreated the greatest of their Prophets ؑ, Moosa ؑ. In Soorah Taa-Haa, Allah ﷻ relates how they rebelled against Allah’s commands and disobeyed Prophet Moosa ؑ. As soon as Moosa ؑ left them in order to speak with His Lord, they plotted against him. They gathered the jewelry they had with them, and Samiri made out of it a calf. They began to worship the calf, and they even made a heinous claim, which is related in this Verse:

﴿فَأَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُم خَوَارٌ فَقَالُوا هَٰذَا إِلَٰهُكُمْ وَإِلَٰهُ مُوسَىٰ فَنَسِيَ ۝﴾

“Then he took out (of the fire) for them (a statue of) a calf which seemed to low. They said: “This is your ilaah (god), and the ilaah (god) of Moosa (Moses), but he [Moosa (Moses)] has forgotten (his god).” (Qur’an 20: 88)

When Moosa ﷺ later found out about what had happened, he ﷺ asked Samiri why he did such a foolish and misguided thing. Allah ﷻ related Samiri's answer in the Noble Qur'an:

﴿قَالَ بَصُرْتُ بِمَا لَمْ يَبْصُرُوا بِهِ فَقَبَضْتُ قَبْضَةً مِّنْ أَثَرِ الرَّسُولِ فَنَبَذْتُهَا وَكَذَلِكَ سَوَّلَتْ لِي نَفْسِي﴾ (٩٦)

“(Samiri) said: “I saw what they saw not, so I took a handful (of dust) from the hoof print of the messenger [Jibreel's (Gabriel) horse] and threw it [into the fire in which were put the ornaments of the Fir'aun's (Pharaoh) people, or into the calf]. Thus my inner-self suggested to me.” (Qur'an 20: 96)

Can any good be expected from people who sink to such low depths of misguidance and wickedness? Can it be expected from them that they will support the truth? Among Verses that mention the covenant taken by the Children of Israel, Allah ﷻ referred to the universality of Prophet Muhammad's message, making it clear to the Children of Israel that they must believe in the Prophet ﷺ.

Stories about the Children of Israel that were revealed during the Makkan era of the Prophet's biography played an important role in developing good qualities in the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. During the Makkan era, details of how the Children of Israel went astray are given, among other reasons, to prepare the believers for the reaction of the Jews to the Prophet's message. For if they mistreated their own Prophets ﷺ, nothing different could be expected of them regarding the message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, even though they found his description in their books. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَتُبْنَا لَهُمْ فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ إِنَّا هُنَا وَإِلَيْكَ قَالِ عَدَائِي أَصِيبْ بِهِ مِنْ أَشْيَاءِ وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَسَاكُنْهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ (١٥١) الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَدْعُوهُمْ مَكْنُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ

بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحْدِثُ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ
الْجَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَإِذْ بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ وَعِزُّهُ وَنَصْرُهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ
(١٥٧) قُلْ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ
الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

“And ordain for us good in this world, and in the Hereafter. Certainly we have turned unto You.” He said: (As to) My Punishment I afflict therewith whom I will and My Mercy embraces all things. That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those who are the Muttaqoon (pious), and give Zakaat; and those who believe in Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, and revelations, etc.); those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad ﷺ) whom they find written with them in the Taurat (Torah) (Deut, xviii, 15) and the Injeel (Gospel) (John xiv, 16), – he commands them for Al-Ma’roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); he allows them as lawful At-Tayibat [(i.e., all good and lawful) as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.], and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khaba’ith (i.e., all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.), he releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allah’s Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muhammad ﷺ), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur’an) which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful. Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He); It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger

(Muhammad ﷺ), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad ﷺ) who believes in Allah and His Words [(this Qur'an), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and also Allah's Word: "Be!" – and he was i.e., Allah's Word: "Be!" and he was, i.e., 'Iesa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary) ﷺ, and follow him so that you may be guided.'" (Qur'an 7: 156-158)

By describing the history of the Children of Israel in *Soorah Al-'Araaf*, Allah ﷻ gives important spiritual guidance to the nation of Muhammad ﷺ. On the one hand, Allah ﷻ is alluding to the role of the Prophet's nation in terms of leading mankind; and on the other hand, Allah ﷻ is warning Muslims not to commit the same mistakes that the Children of Israel committed. Consider the situation of the *Al-Asbaat* and how they suffered from shortages of food and drink. Then Allah ﷻ bestowed upon them gushing springs, manna, and quails, and plentiful shade. Were they then thankful for those blessings? And did they fulfill their religious duties? The answer to both questions is, no; instead of being obedient, they were rebellious, stubborn, disobedient, and deceitful.

Although they spoke lies about Islam and the Prophet ﷺ, the Quraish soon realized that they were unable to say anything against Islam that was true or even seemingly true or based upon proofs. Frustrated by his people's situation, An-Nadr ibn Al-Haarith expressed Quraish's inability to put down the message of Islam by saying to the other leaders of the Quraish, "O people of Quraish, by Allah, a matter has descended upon you for which you have not yet been able to make a counterattack through the use of trickery. So consider your situation, for by Allah, a great matter indeed has befallen you." The leaders of the Quraish thereafter agreed to send An-Nadr ibn Al-Haarith and 'Uqbah ibn Abee Mu'ait to Jewish scholars in Al-Madeenah. They wanted to learn more about the reality of the Prophet's message, not because they wanted to follow it, but because they felt that the Jews might be able to provide them with information that they could use to debate the Prophet ﷺ. The leaders of the Quraish were not so

ignorant as not to know that the malice of the Jews was directed towards all Prophets ﷺ. The coming of the Prophet ﷺ was a great blow to the plans of the Jews. One of the main reasons why they lived in the Arabian Peninsula for so many years was that they knew that a Prophet ﷺ was going to be sent to that area; they ardently hoped that that Prophet would be chosen from their ranks, so that he could put an end to their differences, and so that he could help them against their enemies.

The polytheists of Makkah and the Jews of Al-Madeenah shared one common goal: bringing an end to the Prophet's *Da'wah*. And so the Jews provided Makkah's delegates with certain questions which they hoped the Prophet ﷺ would not be able to answer.

Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said:

The Quraish sent An-Nadr ibn Al-Haarith and 'Uqbah ibn Mu'ait to meet with Jewish scholars in Al-Madeenah. Quraish's leaders said to their two delegates, 'Ask them about Muhammad, describe him to them, and inform them about what he says. For indeed, they are the people of the first book (i.e., the Torah), and they have knowledge that we do not possess – from the knowledge of the Prophets.' The two of them left until they reached Al-Madeenah. Once there, they asked Jewish scholars about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The two of them described his affair to them, as well as some of his sayings. And they said, 'Verily, you are the people of the Torah, and we have indeed come to you, so that you can inform us about this person who is with us (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ).' The Jewish scholars said, 'Ask him about three (matters) that we will command you with. If he informs you about them, then he is a Prophet, who is sent (by Allah). And if he does not do so, then the man is a fabricator of lies. Then (after you question him) establish your opinion regarding him. Ask him about youths who have departed in the first age: What was their story? For their story is indeed amazing. And ask him about a travelling man, who reached both the eastern and western parts of the earth: What was his story? And ask him about the *Ar-Rooh*: What is it? If he informs you about these matters, then he is a

Prophet, and so you must then follow him. If he doesn't inform you (about the answers to these questions), then he is a man who fabricates lies, and you should act regarding his situation as you see fit.' An-Nadr and 'Uqbah then set out until they reached the Quraish in Makkah. They said, 'O people of Quraish, we have come to you with that which will resolve what is happening between you and Muhammad. The Jewish scholars (of Al-Madeenah) ordered us to ask him about certain matters.' The two of them then told the others about the questions. They then went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, 'O Muhammad, inform us,' and they went on to ask him the questions that they (the Jewish scholars of Al-Madeenah) ordered them to ask. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to them, 'I will inform you tomorrow concerning what you asked me about,' but he ﷺ didn't say, 'In Sha Allah (If Allah wills).' They left him, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ remained (in waiting) for fifteen nights without Allah sending any revelation to him concerning what had happened (concerning the questions of the Quraish). Nor did Jibreel ﷺ come to him (during those nights). (This continued) until the people of Makkah plunged into evil talk, saying, 'Muhammad had promised us for the next day, and today is day fifteen. We have woken up today without him having informed us about anything we asked him about.' (And the situation continued) until the pause of revelation saddened the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and it became very hard upon him (to know and hear) what the people of Makkah were saying. Then Jibreel came to him from Allah - 'Azza wa-Jall (the Possessor of might and majesty) - with the Chapter (Soorah) about the People of the Cave. In it, the Prophet ﷺ is admonished for becoming sad on their account. (Also in it) is news of what they asked him about concerning the matters of the young men and of the travelling man (and of the *Ar-Rooh*). (And in it) is the saying of Allah 'Azza wa Jall (the Possessor of might and majesty):

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا

قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

"And they ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning the Rooh (the Spirit); Say: "The Rooh (the Spirit): it is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little." (Qur'an 17: 85)

And when the Jews heard, "And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little," they said, "How is that so, when we have been given the Torah? Indeed, whosoever is given the Torah has been given much goodness." This Verse was then revealed:

﴿قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا﴾ (١٩) ﴿

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) to mankind). "If the sea were ink for (writing) the Words of my Lord, surely, the sea would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord would be finished, even if we brought (another sea) like it for its aid." (Qur'an 18: 109)

The Jews of Al-Madeenah provided questions to the Quraish, questions that were answered in *Soorah Al-Kahf*. Although their questions were answered, they shouldn't have asked them in the first place. Since when did not knowing the answer to a question prove a Prophet ﷺ to be false? Prophets ﷺ are human beings, and they have knowledge of the unseen world, but only that knowledge which Allah ﷻ reveals to them. The Jews should have considered the case of a specific Prophet ﷺ that was sent to them – Moosa ﷺ, one of the greatest of Prophets ﷺ from the Children of Israel. Although he was a Prophet ﷺ sent from Allah ﷻ, Moosa ﷺ did not know the interpretation of the three events that took place while he was in the company of Khidr ﷺ; in fact, he objected to what Khidr ﷺ did, even though, as he later found out, what Khidr ﷺ did in each of the three situations was ultimately correct. None of this had an effect on Moosa's status as a Prophet, and the Children of Israel didn't doubt his Prophethood. That being the case, what right did they have to use the questions they thought up to ascertain the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ?

In addition to answering the questions of the Jewish scholars, Allah ﷻ also used the situation as a means of alluding to near relief and help for the Muslims. For just as the young men of 'the Cave' found shelter, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ were soon to find shelter in Al-Madeenah.

The Siege And Embargo That Occurred At The End Of The Seventh Year Of Prophethood

The more the polytheists of the Quraish persecuted the Muslims, the more the Muslims became steadfast upon their religion, and the more widely did Islam spread to various Arab tribes - and consequently, that cycle began anew with the Quraish becoming more brutal and more oppressive in their persecution. Their ire towards the Muslims reached its pinnacle seven years after the Prophet ﷺ received revelation for the first time. The leaders of the Quraish issued an edict, prohibiting members of the Quraish from engaging in any dealings whatsoever with the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, but also with non-Muslim members of the Banu Haashim clan - except Abu Lahab (and maybe a few others like him), who sided with the polytheists.

Speaking of the seventh year of Prophethood, Az-Zuhree said, "Then the polytheists intensified, more so than ever before, their persecution of the Muslims, until the Muslims became very weak as a result of the severe ordeal they were going through. The people of the Quraish openly agreed to kill the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When Abu Taalib saw what they were doing, he gathered the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib (clan) and ordered them to take the Messenger of Allah ﷺ into their mountain pass and to defend him from those who wanted to kill him. They all agreed upon that plan, both the Muslims and non-Muslims among them. Some did so out of a sense of loyalty (to the clan); others among them did so because of their *Eemaan* (faith) and certainty (about the truth). When the Quraish found out that the Banu Muttalib clan was protecting the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, they agreed among themselves not to sit with them, conduct business with them, or

enter their houses – until they surrendered the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to them so that they could kill him. From their cunning, they wrote down a declaration, and they made pledges and agreements not to ever make reconciliation with the Quraish, nor to show mercy to them, until they handed him over to them so that they could kill him.”

Another narration contains the following: “(They pledged) not to marry their daughters to them, nor to marry their daughters; not to sell them anything, nor to buy anything from them; not to allow any means of sustenance to reach them; not to make reconciliation with them; not to show mercy to them; not to mix with them; not to sit with them; not speak to them; not to enter their houses – until they handed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ over to them so that they could kill him. Then they made a pledge and a covenant to abide by those terms. Next, they hung up the declaration (that outlined the terms of their covenant) inside of the Ka’bah, emphasizing upon their own selves (the seriousness of the pact).”

The children of Haashim remained besieged in their mountain pass for three years, three very difficult years. The Quraish prevented them from going to the marketplace; and whenever any merchandise arrived in Makkah from abroad, the Quraish would purchase all of it, regardless of whether they needed it or not, for their sole intent was to inflict as much harm as possible on the Banu Haashim and Banu Muttalib clans, and consequently get their hands on the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Not every single member of the Banu Muttalib clan remained besieged in the mountain pass; a few took sides with the Quraish; among those few some were not pleased with the situation. Meanwhile, in the mountain pass, Abu Taalib feared that someone would act treacherously and attempt to kill the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in his sleep. So when people went to their places of sleep at night, Abu Taalib told the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to go to his place of sleep, so that anyone who wanted to act treacherously could see where he was. Then, when everyone fell asleep, Abu Taalib ordered one of his children, brothers, or

nephews to take the place of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and instructed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to sleep in one of their places.

The siege and overall embargo became very difficult to bear both for the Companions ﷺ and for the members of the Banu Muttalib clan – so difficult that they were forced, out of hunger, to eat the leaves of trees. One of them would go out to urinate, would hear the sound of something dry beneath his feet, and would realize that it was a piece of a camel's hide. He would then take it, wash it, burn it, crush it, chew it, and then drink water over it. It would then be sufficient nourishment for him for three days. And from behind the mountain pass, the Quraish could always hear the sounds of babies crying from hunger, yet they continued to torture their enemies.

When three years passed, Allah ﷻ decreed for certain noblemen of the Quraish to bring an end to the ruthless siege. The person who led the internal dissent was Hishaam ibn 'Amr Al-Haashimee. Hishaam went to Zuhair ibn Abee Umayyah, a member of the Makhzoom clan – the clan of Abu Jahl. Although Zuhair was, through his father, a member of the Makhzoom clan, he was very closely related to the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan, for his mother was 'Aatikah, daughter of 'Abdul-Muttalib. Hishaam said, "O Zuhair, are you pleased to eat food, wear clothing, and marry women, while your uncles (from your mother's side) are in the situation you know very well about? They cannot buy anything, nor can anyone buy anything from them. They cannot marry (from outside of themselves), nor can they marry (their daughters) to anyone (other than someone from among themselves). Indeed, I swear by Allah that, had they been the uncles of Abul-Hakam ibn Hishaam – i.e., Abu Jahl – and had I then invited him to do the same to them that he asks you to do (to your uncles), he would never have agreed to do so."

Greatly moved and frustrated at the same time, Zuhair said, "Woe upon you, O Hishaam! What can I do? I am only one man. By Allah, if I had with me another man, I would have made a

stand to nullify it (the declaration to place an embargo upon the children of 'Abdul-Muttalib)."

"You have indeed found a man (to join you)," said Hishaam.

"Who is he?"

"Me," said Hishaam.

"Then find us a third (person to join in our cause)," said Zuhair.

Hishaam then went to Al-Mut'im ibn 'Adee and said to him, "O Mut'im, are you pleased that two subtribes from the children of 'Abd-Manaaf will be destroyed, while you will witness that happening, and while you are in agreement with the Quraish (regarding their destruction) ..."

Mut'im said, "Woe upon you! What shall I do? I am only one man."

"I have found for you a second," said Hishaam.

"And who is he?" asked Mut'im.

"Me."

"Find us a third," said Mut'im.

"I already have," said Hishaam.

"Who?" asked Mut'im.

"Zuhair ibn Umayyah."

"Then find us a fourth," said Mut'im. And so Hishaam went to Abu Al-Bukhtaree ibn Hishaam, and basically said to him what he had said to Mut'im ibn 'Adee.

"Woe upon you!" exclaimed Abu Al-Bukhtaree. "And will we find anyone who will help us accomplish that?"

"Yes," said Hishaam, "Zuhair ibn Abee Umayyah, Mut'im ibn 'Adee, and myself."

"Find us a fifth (person)," said Abu Al-Bukhtaree. Hishaam then went to Zum'ah ibn Al-Aswad ibn Al-Muttalib ibn Asad, spoke to him, mentioned his family relationship with the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan, and their rights upon him.

Zum'ah said, "As for this matter that you are inviting me to, do

you have anyone to help (you)?” Hishaam answered in the affirmative and named the others who had agreed to help. The five of them agreed to meet that night in the northern part of Makkah. During that meeting, they agreed upon the course of action they were going to take. Once they had decided what they were going to do, Zuhair said, “Let me go before you. I will speak first.”

In the morning, they all went to their respective gatherings. All of the gatherings of the Quraish were situated beside the Ka’bah, so the five of them were at once separated, so as to avoid arousing suspicion, and in close proximity to one another. As for Zuhair, he was wearing a robe, and he began the morning by making seven circuits around the K’abah. He then stood before the people and said, “Shall we eat food and wear clothing, while the children of Haashim are being destroyed. They cannot buy, nor can anyone buy from them. By Allah, I will not sit down until this false declaration, this divisive declaration, is torn up.”

Abu Jahl, who was to one corner of the *Masjid*, said, “You have lied: by Allah, it will not be torn up.”

It was time for the next phase of the plan: Zum’ah ibn Al-Aswad said to Abu Jahl, “By Allah, you are the greater liar. We were not pleased with the writing of the declaration when it was being written.” It was now Abu Al-Bukhtaree’s turn to speak: “Zum’ah has spoken the truth. We were not pleased with what was written in it, and we do not accept it.” Al-Mut’im ibn ‘Adee said, “The two of you have spoken the truth. And he has lied who says otherwise. We absolve ourselves from it and from what has been written in it.” And then Hishaam ibn ‘Amr expressed a similar sentiment. Abu Jahl, realizing what was happening, said, “This is a matter that has been decided upon during the night. Consultations were made regarding this matter in other than this place.” Meanwhile, Abu Taalib was seated to one side of the *Masjid*; yet throughout the discussion, he didn’t speak.

Mut’im ibn ‘Adee went to the declaration in order to tear it up, but

he found that woodworms (or termites) had eaten the scroll upon which it was written. The only part of the scroll that remained undamaged was the part that said, "In Your Name, O Allah."^[1]

Ibn Ishaq related a slightly different account of what had happened. According to his narration, Allah ﷻ sent woodworms (or termites) to eat up those parts of the declaration that contained any of Allah's Names. When the woodworms (or termites) were done with the declaration, all that remained in it were its core contents, which consisted of wrongdoing, the severing of family ties, and slander. No one knew what had happened to the declaration, since it was kept within the Ka'bah. But, through revelation, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ knew what had happened to it. He informed his uncle, Abu Taalib, who then went to the Quraish and told them as well. Of course the Quraish were incredulous about what Abu Taalib told them, since the declaration was locked up inside the Ka'bah, and only certain leaders of the Quraish were allowed to enter the Ka'bah. Nonetheless, Abu Taalib knew his nephew well, and knew that he wouldn't make up such a story, and so he said to the Quraish, "If he is lying, then I promise to surrender him to you, so that you can then kill him. But if he is telling the truth, will that then stop you from aiding one another against us?" He made them pledge to bide by the conditions he stipulated, and they made him do the same. When they took out the declaration, and spread it out, they of course saw that it was as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ described it to be. Mut'im ibn 'Adee and Hishaam ibn 'Amr said, "We absolve ourselves from this declaration of severing family ties, of transgression, and of wrongdoing. And we will not help anyone corrupt ourselves and our noblemen." One after another, other noblemen from the Quraish expressed a similar sentiment. The siege and embargo came to an end, and the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan left their mountain pass and returned to Makkah.

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Katheer (2/43-50, 67-69).

Lessons and Morals

- 1) If we closely consider the provisions of the declaration, we find that the Quraish didn't just put together a last-minute document; instead, they employed their best minds and put in long hours of planning and mutual consultation. To see just how much thought went into the declaration, let us study it one provision at a time:
 - a) They forbade intermarriage between the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan and the rest of the Quraish. In general, and especially among tribal societies, marriage is what bonds people together. Marriage between two families leads to mutual harmony, cooperation, and brotherhood. The Quraish knew that, if intermarriage with the children of 'Abdul-Muttalib were to occur, it would mean the end of their embargo, which is why they of course included a provision in the declaration to forbid such marriages from taking place. Consider how, in the end, one of the key players who brought about an end to the embargo was Zuhair, who, based on his father's marriage to 'Aatikah – a member of the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan – sympathized with his besieged relatives.
 - b) In forbidding people from doing business with the children of 'Abdul-Muttalib, the Quraish were effectively cutting off their livelihood and slowly starving them to death. They succeeded to a great degree in their ruthless aims, for the besieged party was forced to eat tree leaves and leather.
 - c) Not only did they forbid members of the Quraish from doing business with Muslims, they also prevented the goods of foreign traders from reaching them. They would quickly purchase the goods, and then set such a high price on them, that no Companion was able to come up with the money to buy them.
 - d) The Quraish chose the wording of their declaration very carefully. They forbade people from doing business with

Muslims, but they feared that some sympathizers would find a loophole by giving Muslims food, not through a business transaction, but as a gift. The Quraish closed the door to this potential practice by stipulating that they would, "Not allow any means of sustenance to reach them."

- e) Fearing that their resolve to punish the Muslims might weaken, the Quraish included two important provisions: First, "To not make reconciliation with them," and second, "To not show any mercy to them." They knew that, if they showed any willingness to make reconciliation or to show mercy, their embargo would quickly come to an end.
- f) It was not enough to simply state that they would show no mercy to Muslims; they felt that they had to also prevent any intermediary step that might lead to showing mercy later on. And so one of the provisions they added to the declaration forbade people from sitting down with Muslims or talking with them. Conversation, even at its simplest level, leads to understanding the views of others. The Quraish feared that, through conversation, Muslims would be able to convince some of Quraish's leaders to bring an end to the siege and embargo, an easy task considering it was clear that Quraish's leaders were in the wrong and that the Muslims were in the right. But no one could hear their point of view, since no one was allowed to even talk to them. Another provision that closed the door to showing mercy involved prohibiting people from entering into the homes of Muslims and members of the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan. It is one thing to hear about the suffering of others, but to actually see it softens the heart. And the last thing Quraish's leaders wanted was for people's hearts to soften towards the Prophet's Companions. When a person with even an ounce of goodness in him enters a house and sees sickness, hunger, and extreme poverty, he feels that he must do something to help its dwellers. The leaders of the Quraish definitely did not want sympathy to be aroused for their enemies, knowing

fully well that some members of the Quraish would sympathize with the plight of the Prophet's Companions. They knew this for two reasons: First, because familial ties would cause members of the Quraish to feel compassion for their relatives from the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan; and second, in the viewpoint of the Quraish, the only mistake that the Muslims made was to choose a religion different from that of the Quraish. Fearing that some members of the Quraish would protest if they knew to what extent the Muslims were suffering, the leaders of the Quraish outright forbade everybody from entering the home of any Muslim.

- g) By hanging up the declaration inside of the Ka'bah, the Quraish gave it and its contents an air of holiness, for both they, and all Arabs, glorified the Ka'bah. They were hoping that holiness would emphasize the need to adhere to the contents of the declaration.
- 2) No matter how hard the situation, a Muslim should make do with the resources and the help that is available to him. In the context of the embargo, Muslims benefited from the help of non-Muslims from the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan. Likewise today, Muslims should use whatever help and freedom of religion there is in the world to spread the message of Islam.
- 3) Abu Taalib was not able to physically overcome the leaders of the Quraish, but he did have some impact on ending the embargo. He composed a poem that was highly critical of Quraish's unjust policies; that poem aroused a sense of loyalty in certain relatives of the Banu Haashim clan, relatives who then met secretly and came up with a good plan to end the siege and embargo.
- 4) It is often the case in oppressive societies that, though it seems as if everyone is in agreement with their government's brutal policies, there are those who are opposed to injustice and have some goodness in them. Such people can often, when the opportunity is right, help bring an end to

oppression and injustice. Muslims should meet with such people and clearly explain to them the just teachings of Islam.

- 5) Abu Lahab was the archetype of treacherous evildoers who came after him. As Abu Lahab illustrated through his actions, close relatives of callers to Islam can show them more hostility than can their bitterest foes.
- 6) Throughout the siege, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ obeyed the Prophet's commands to the letter, showing a great deal of discipline and patience. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ instructed them not to be confrontational with the enemy, but to instead show restraint. Throughout the siege, Muslims were being trained to be obedient to their leader ﷺ, especially those who were strong, brave, and willing to fight – the likes of Hamzah ﷺ, 'Umar ﷺ, Abu Bakr ﷺ, and 'Uthmaan ﷺ. They listened and obeyed; they were treated with disdain, but they held back their hands, not during a single incident only, or for a single month only, but for three years. During those years, they were not permitted to fire a single arrow or to throw a single punch. That they obeyed the Prophet's command clearly shows how disciplined they were, for nothing would have been easier or more satisfying than to assassinate Abu Jahl or spontaneously start a war without thinking of consequences, a war that, if instigated, could have had evil repercussions on the Prophet's *Da'wah*.
- 7) Miracles and clear proofs have no effect on those who blindly follow their desires – those whose hearts and minds are blocked from the truth. Abu Taalib told them about what the Prophet ﷺ said: that woodworms had eaten the declaration and that the only parts of it left uneaten were the words: "In Your Name, O Allah." What the Prophet ﷺ told them about, they saw with their very own eyes, yet not a single person among them believed.
- 8) At least in one regard, the siege and embargo actually had a

positive effect on the Prophet's *Da'wah*. News of what was happening in Makkah spread all over Arabia – mainly during the *Hajj* season – and foreign tribes became impressed with how the Muslims were suffering from hunger, thirst, and isolation, all for the sake of their beliefs. Some among them began to realize that, if Muslims were willing to bear so many hardships to preserve their faith, it must be a true message that the Prophet ﷺ was inviting people to follow.

Regardless of their religion, Arabs became angry with the Quraish for their brutal treatment of the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib clan. Members of foreign tribes felt sympathy towards the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ, so that no sooner did the siege come to an end, than many people began to enter the fold of Islam. Not only did the leaders of the Quraish fail to meet their goal, they themselves contributed, albeit unwittingly, to the spread of Islam.

- 9) That the Banu Haashim and Banu Al-Muttalib clans protected the Prophet ﷺ had an effect on Islamic jurisprudence later on: The one fifth that is given to "near relatives (refer to the following Verse)" is given to those two clans. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَآبَرِ السَّبِيلِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ ءَامَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ
عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ الْجَمْعَانِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

﴿٤١﴾

"And know that whatever of war-booty that you may gain, verily one-fifth (1/5th) of it is assigned to Allah, and to the Messenger, and to the near relatives [of the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)], (and also) the orphans, Al-Masaakeen (the poor) and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allah and in that which We sent down to Our slave (Muhammad ﷺ) on the Day of Criterion (between right and wrong), the Day when the two forces met (the

Battle of Badr) – And Allah is Able to do all things.’’ (Qur’an 8: 41)

Commenting on this Verse, Ibn Katheer said, “As for the share that goes to “near relatives,” it is given to the children of Haashim and the children of Al-Muttalib, because the children of Al-Muttalib supported the children of Haashim during the days of ignorance and during the early days of Islam. Furthermore, they entered the mountain pass, being angry for the sake of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and out of a sense of (tribal) loyalty to him. The Muslims among them did so out of obedience to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and the disbelievers among them did so out of tribal loyalty, honour, and obedience to Abu Taalib, uncle of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. As for the Banu ‘Abd-Shams and Banu Naufal clans, they too were cousins of the Banu Haashim clan, but they did not lift a finger to help them. To the contrary, they waged war against them, opposed them, and supported the various subtribes of the Quraish in their war against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Because Banu ‘Abd-Shams and Banu Naufal were so closely related to Banu Haashim, yet decided to fight against them, Abu Taalib disparaged them more severely than he did others in his famous *Al-Laamiyyah* poem. According to some narrations, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was speaking about Banu Al-Muttalib, he ﷺ said, ‘Verily, they did not forsake us in (the days of) ignorance or in (the days of) Islam.’^[1] The majority of scholars maintain that he ﷺ was referring to Banu Haashim and Banu Al-Muttalib.”^[2]

- 10) Years after the embargo and siege, during the farewell pilgrimage, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted to make camp in the valley of Banu Kinaanah, so that he could remember past hardships and thank Allah ﷻ for blessing him with the

^[1] Related by Abu Daawood, in *Al-Kharaaj Wal-Imaarah*; *Hadeeth* number: 2980.

^[2] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (2/312).

conquest of Makkah. The valley of the Banu Kinaanah clan revived memories of the siege because the Banu Kinaanah tribe allied themselves with the Quraish against Banu Haashim, pledging not to do business with them or give them shelter. Usaamah ibn Zaid ؓ related that, during the Prophet's farewell pilgrimage, he ؓ said to the Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allah, where will we stop (to make camp) tomorrow?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "And has 'Aqeel left for us a place ('Aqeel inherited all of Abu Taalib's wealth and then sold most, or all, of his property)?" He ﷺ then said, "Tomorrow, we will stop (to make camp) in the valley of Banu Kinaanah, at Al-Muhassib (where the Jimaar are pelted with pebbles during *Hajj* in Al-Minaa), where the Quraish made a covenant based upon disbelief." He ﷺ was referring to how the Banu Kinaanah tribe formed an alliance with the Quraish against Banu Haashim. According to the terms of that alliance, Banu Kinnanah agreed to neither conduct business with nor shelter members of the Banu Haashim clan.



**Migration To Abyssinia, The Ordeal
Of Taaif, And The Gift Of *Al-Israa*
(The Night Journey)**



I

Working In Harmony With The Law Of Cause And Effect

One of the universal laws of Allah ﷻ regarding the creation is the law of 'causes.' Cause and effect is a basic reality in the universe that we must understand and be in harmony with. Allah ﷻ created the universe and then established laws by which it is run. To be sure, had Allah ﷻ wanted, He ﷻ could have made every effect occur without a cause. But it is from His Will and Wisdom that cause and effect occurrences are the norms, and miracles are the rare exceptions. Hence angels carry Allah's Throne, vegetation grows with water, and humans earn sustenance through work.

Allah's universal law of cause and effect is clearly palpable in the universe around us. And it is established in the Book of Allah ﷻ, wherein Allah ﷻ made it clear to Muslims that they must be in harmony with this law both in their worldly and religious affairs. If they want sustenance in this world or Paradise in the Hereafter, they must do those actions that lead to the fulfillment of their goals. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقُلْ أَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلِّيِّ الْعَالِيِّ
وَالشَّهَادَةُ فَبَيْنَكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾﴾

“And say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Do deeds! Allah will see your deeds, and (so will) His Messenger and the believers. And you will be brought back to the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen .

Then he will inform you of what you used to do.” (Qur’an 9: 105)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

“He it is, Who has made the earth subservient to you (i.e., easy for you to walk, to live and to do agriculture on it, etc.), so walk in the path thereof and eat of His provision, and to Him will be the Resurrection.” (Qur’an 67: 15)

When Maryam ؑ was in a state of weakness, Allah ﷻ ordered her to take an action (cause) that would result in her getting sustenance (effect). Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَهَزَىٰ إِلَيْكَ بِعِذَةِ الْخَلَّةِ تُسْقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رُطْبًا غَنِيًّا ﴿١٥﴾﴾

“And shake the trunk of date-palm towards you, it will let fall fresh ripe-dates upon you.” (Qur’an 19: 25)

In every aspect of his life, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ lived in harmony with the law of cause and effect; and he ﷺ taught his Companions ؓ to do the same. The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ؓ understood that, regardless whether something happened through a miracle or through a cause and effect chain, it ultimately happened because Allah ﷻ decreed it to happen. They understood that by working to achieve their aims, they were following one of Allah’s universal laws that apply to the universe and to how it is run. And so they didn’t disparage work and planning, as some misguided ascetics do; rather, they knew that working and planning are required of them in their religion.

If Muslims lag behind the rest of the world today, it is not because they have been wronged, but because Allah’s justice has been rendered upon them as a punishment for their having forgotten and neglected their religion. Both in knowledge and in action, Muslims today are not in harmony with Allah’s universal laws; they think that success will come to them through dreaming, but

nothing could be further from the truth:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْت أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ (١٨٢)﴾

"This is because of that (evil) which your hands have sent before you. And certainly, Allah is never unjust to (His) slaves."
(Qur'an 3: 182)

One might then ask, "But if this is Allah's punishment for believers who have disobeyed Him, then what about polytheists who disbelieve in Allah ﷻ altogether? Why is it that they have, from a worldly point of view, achieved such prosperity, advancement, and stability?" Disbelievers have not achieved historically unparalleled prosperity because they are closer to Allah or because He ﷻ is pleased with them; nor have they done so through a miracle or the use of magic. It is not their beliefs or their way of thinking that has enabled them to become so technologically advanced. The reason they are prosperous and advanced is that, through His universal law of cause and effect (work and achieve results), Allah ﷻ has opened the door to worldly prosperity to all of his creation, to believers and disbelievers, righteous people and wicked evildoers. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُخْسُونَ (١٥)﴾

"Whosoever desires the life of the world and its glitter; to them We shall pay in full (the wages of) their deeds therein, and they will have no diminution therein." (Qur'an 11: 15)

Through His universal law of cause and effect, Allah ﷻ has made worldly prosperity hinge upon human planning and human efforts. Whoever strives and works – or in other words, whoever lives in harmony with Allah's universal law of cause and effect – will achieve results in proportion to his efforts. True, all the technological and material advancement in the world will not open the Doors of Paradise to disbelievers, and will not avail them

in the least in the Hereafter. But we must also keep in mind that negligence on the part of Muslims is a sin, for which they will be held accountable.

Placing one's Trust in Allah ﷻ, and Living in Harmony with Allah's Universal Law of Cause and Effect

Some Muslims, especially those who are of an ascetic bent, feel that there is a contradiction between placing one's trust in Allah ﷻ and working to achieve one's goals. On an individual level, where this sentiment is most palpably felt, one might feel that it is praiseworthy to sit in the *Masjid* 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When such a person is asked about how he procures food and drink, he answers, "I trust in Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ will provide for me." He fails to realize, however, that Allah ﷻ commands him to work and that there is no contradiction between him working and striving, and him placing his trust in Allah ﷻ.

A believer has a highly nuanced understanding when it comes to this issue. He works and strives and plans in a lawful manner because he has faith in Allah ﷻ and because he wants to be obedient to Allah ﷻ. Yet at the same time, he does not trust in his action and planning; he does not feel that it is his action and planning that will bring him the results he wants. It is up to him to work, and then the results are independent of his actions, for it is Allah ﷻ Who decrees results. With this understanding, the believer does not put unnecessary faith in or dependence upon his actions; but at the same time, he does take whatever action is necessary to achieve his goals because he wants rewards for being obedient to Allah ﷻ.

In various *Hadeeth* narrations, the Prophet ﷺ established that it is necessary to both trust in Allah ﷻ and live in harmony with Allah's law of cause and effect. For example, Anas ibn Maalik ؓ reported that a man once stood with his she-camel at the door of the *Masjid* and intended to enter. He ؓ said, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, should I leave it free (without tying it up) and place my trust (in Allah)?" It was as if this man felt that taking necessary

action contradicts placing one's trust in Allah ﷻ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ explained to him – with the most succinct of wording – that no such contradiction exists. He ﷺ said, "Rather, tie it up, and place your trust (in Allah)."

In another *Hadeeth*, which is related by 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Were you to trust in Allah as He truly should be trusted, He would have provided sustenance for you, just as He provides sustenance for a bird, which leaves hungry in the beginning of the day, and returns full at the end of the day."^[1] In this *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ exhorted Muslims to trust in Allah ﷻ, and at the same time, he ﷺ pointed to the importance of working (i.e., applying Allah's universal law of cause and effect) by mentioning how a bird leaves in the morning in search of its sustenance.

Regarding this issue, the correct Islamic understanding can be summarized in the following points:

- 1) Islam confirms Allah's universal law of 'cause and effect.'
- 2) When one depends on causes and means alone, without depending on and placing his trust in Allah ﷻ, then one has perpetrated an act of *Shirk* (associating partners with Allah in worship).
- 3) Islam establishes a clear link between causes and *Tawheed* (the Oneness of Allah ﷻ); both causes and results are in the Hand of Allah ﷻ.
- 4) Therefore, based on the first three points, a Muslim must both do what is lawfully necessary to achieve his goals and place his trust in Allah ﷻ.

Muslims of today must realize that only if they plan and work can they achieve prosperity. So long as Muslims do their utmost to achieve success, Allah ﷻ will help them. And Allah ﷻ does not require of them an effort that is beyond their scope or ability.

^[1] Related by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/52); *Hadeeth* number: 370. Ash-Shaikh Ahmad Shaakir said, "Its chain is authentic."

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخِرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ﴾ ٦٠ ﴿

“And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war (tanks, planes, missiles, artillery, etc.) to threaten the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides whom, you may not know but whom Allah does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allah shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly.” (Qur’an 8: 60)

It is as if Allah ﷻ is saying to them in this Verse, “Do the most you are able to do, and prepare as much as you can prepare, even if your preparations are not as good as that of your enemy.” For whatever is beyond the ability of Muslims, Allah ﷻ provides help with His unlimited power. Acting to the utmost of one’s ability is at once proof of one’s sincerity and a prerequisite for achieving Allah’s help.

Migration To Abyssinia

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا لَنبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَلَآخِرُ
الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝﴾ (1)

"And as for those who emigrated for the Cause of Allah, after suffering oppression, We will certainly give them goodly residence in this world, but indeed the reward of the Hereafter will be greater, if they but knew!" (Qur'an 16: 41)

In regard to the meaning of this Verse, Al-Qurtubee (may Allah have mercy on him) related that Qataadah (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "Those that are intended here are the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ. The polytheists wronged them in Makkah and forced them to leave; a party of them reached Abyssinia, and then Allah ﷻ provided them with the land of migration (Al-Madeenah) and with helpers from among the believers."

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ يَاعِبَادِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ
وَأَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةٌ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّادِقُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ۝﴾ (10)

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "O My slaves who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), be afraid of your Lord (Allah) and keep your duty to Him. Good is (the reward) for those

who do good in this world, and Allah's earth is spacious (so if you cannot worship Allah at a place, then go to another)! Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning." (Qur'an 39: 10)

Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said that those who are intended here are "Ja'far ibn Abu Taalib ؓ and those who went with him to Abyssinia."

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَعْبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَسِعَةٌ فَإِنِّي فَأَعْبُدُونَ﴾ (٥٦)

"O My slaves who believe! Certainly, spacious is My earth. Therefore worship Me (Alone)." (Qur'an 29: 56)

Commenting on this last Verse, Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "Here, Allah is commanding His believing slaves to migrate from a land wherein they are not able to practice their religion to Allah's spacious earth, where they can practice it."

The First Migration To Abyssinia

Frustrated by their inability to stop Islam from spreading, the leaders of the Quraish became ruthless in their persecution of the Prophet's Companions ؓ. They eagerly resorted to any method of torture that they could think of – beating their victims, starving them, baking them on the hot sands of the desert, and so on. Their purpose was twofold: First, they were venting their anger on the Prophet's Companions ؓ, and second, they were trying to make them abandon their religion.

What is truly amazing about this period of persecution is that not a single Companion ؓ apostatized from fear of torture or death, a fact that attests to their sincerity. It is true, however, that some of them were so severely put to trial that they uttered words of disbelief; that being the case, their hearts were at peace with *Eemaan* (faith). And at any rate, what they did is correct, for in Islam, whenever one is tortured and coerced to the point that he fears being seriously harmed, he may speak words of disbelief, so long as his heart is at rest with *Eemaan* (faith). Nonetheless, others

among the Prophet's Companions ﷺ remained steadfast not just inwardly, but outwardly as well: No matter how much they were persecuted or tortured, they refused to succumb to the demands of their torturers; for example, when his torturers demanded that he utter words of disbelief, Bilaal ibn Rabaah ﷺ simply repeated the words, "One, One," pointing to the Oneness of Allah ﷻ.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was relatively safe due first to the protection of Allah ﷻ and then the protection of Abu Taalib; many of his Companions ﷺ, on the other hand, were being severely tortured. Being that he ﷺ was merciful and kind to his nation, he ﷺ did what he could to alleviate their hardships; but within Makkah, he ﷺ knew that he was unable to do anything significant to help them. And so he ﷺ said to them, "Perhaps you should go to the land of Abyssinia, for in it dwells a king in whose presence no one is wronged. And it is the land of truth. (Stay there) until Allah provides you with relief from the situation you are presently in." Fearing not so much persecution but the result of constant persecution – the temptation of abandoning one's religion – some of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ migrated to Abyssinia. It was the first migration in Islam.

Scholars have mentioned various reasons that prompted the Prophet's Companions ﷺ to migrate to Abyssinia. One reason was that they felt it necessary to flee with their religion, fearing that constant torture might tempt them to apostatize. Ibn Ishaq said, "At that point in time, some Muslims from the Prophet's Companions ﷺ went to Abyssinia, fearing temptation and fleeing towards Allah ﷻ with their religion."^[1]

Sayyid Qutub offers a different explanation, arguing that the main purpose of the migration was to spread Islam outside of Makkah, and not simply to flee from persecution. In *Fee Dhilaal Al-Qur'an* (In the Shade of the Qur'an), he wrote, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was searching for a stronghold outside of Makkah, a stronghold that could protect the beliefs of Islam and guarantee

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hisham (1/398).

the freedom to openly practice Islam. In my estimation, this was the foremost reason that prompted the migration (to Abyssinia). The view which states that the Prophet's Companions ﷺ migrated only to save themselves is not corroborated by strong evidence. Had they migrated only to save themselves (from torture and temptation to leave the fold of Islam), those Muslims who were weakest – in status, strength, and protection – would have migrated as well, but the fact is that slaves and weak Muslims, who bore the major grunt of persecution and torture, did not migrate. Only men who had strong tribal ties – ties that protected them from torture and temptation – migrated to Abyssinia. In fact, the majority of those who migrated were members of the Quraish (as opposed to imported slaves or weak Muslims who lived in Makkah but were not from the Quraish, such as the family of Yasir ؓ)."[1]

Showing agreement with Sayyid Qutub's assessment of the matter, Al-Ghadbaan wrote, "This poignant observation from Sayyid (may Allah have mercy on him) is supported by events in the *Seerah* (the Prophet's biography). In my view, the strongest evidence of that is the overall result of their migration to Abyssinia. From what we know (i.e., from what is related in historical narrations), the Messenger of Allah ﷺ didn't send for those who migrated to Al-Habashah until after (the Prophet's) migration to Yathrib (i.e., Al-Madeenah), Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, and Al-Hudaybiyyah. For a total of five years (after the Prophet's migration), Yathrib was vulnerable to complete destruction at the hands of the Quraish. The last of Quraish's attacks and attempts of destroying (the Muslims in Al-Madeenah) occurred during (the Battle of) Al-Khandaq. After this battle, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ felt certain that Al-Madeenah was a safe stronghold for Muslims – there being no more danger of an impending attack from the polytheists – he ﷺ summoned those who had migrated to Abyssinia. There was no longer any need to keep a

[1] *Fee Dhilaal Al-Qur'an* (1/29).

precautionary base in Abyssinia, where the Prophet ﷺ would have possibly been able to seek refuge had Yathrib fallen into the hands of the enemy.”^[1]

Professor Duroozah expressed a similar sentiment, saying, “It certainly occurs to the mind that one of the reasons why the Christian land of Abyssinia was chosen, was the hope of spreading *Da’wah* (the message of Islam) there. And the appointment of Ja’far ؓ (as leader of the Muslims in Abyssinia) had a great deal to do with that hope.” Another scholar who shares the same view is Dr. Sulaiman ibn Hamd Al-’Audah, who said, “The fact that An-Najaashee (the king of Abyssinia) and others from the people of Abyssinia embraced Islam supports the view that spreading Islam in Abyssinia was one of the reasons and goals behind the migration to that land. Furthermore, it was with the Prophet’s guidance that Muslims both migrated to Abyssinia and then remained there until after the conquest of Khaibar. It is related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree* that, when the Ash’ariyyeen met him in Abyssinia, Ja’far ؓ said to them, ‘Verily, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent us here, and he ordered us to reside here, so reside here with us.’^[2] This means that they went to Abyssinia with a specific mission in mind – and there is no mission that is more honourable than that of spreading the religion of Allah ﷻ. The mission came to an end when those who migrated were instructed to return (to Al-Madeenah).”^[3]

This does not mean that it was the only reason why they migrated to Abyssinia. To be sure, the Prophet’s Companions ؓ needed to go where they could freely and safely practice their religion. That they went seeking safety and freedom from persecution is indicated by the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, “For in it (i.e., Abyssinia) dwells a king in whose presence no one is wronged.” Safety and freedom is what the Prophet’s Companions ؓ found in

^[1] *Al-Manhaj Al-Harakee Lis-Seerah* (1/67, 68).

^[2] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of *Al-Maghaazee*, chapter “The Battle of Khaibar”; *Hadeeth* number: 4230.

^[3] Refer to *Al-Hijrah Al-Oolah Fil-Islam* by Dr. Salmaan Al-’Audah, pg. 34.

Abyssinia. Umm Salamah ؓ said, "When we stopped to reside in the land of Abyssinia, we lived alongside the best of neighbours, An-Najaashee. We safely practiced our religion, and we worshipped Allah ﷻ without consequently being harmed."^[1]

Why the Prophet ﷺ chose Abyssinia

There are a number of reasons why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose Abyssinia over other lands. First, An-Najaashee, the king of Abyssinia, was a just king, a fact that the Prophet ﷺ pointed out when he ﷺ said, "For in it dwells a king in whose presence no one is wronged." This proved to be true, for An-Najaashee protected his Muslim guests and refused to hand them over to the Quraish. Furthermore, An-Najaashee was a righteous man. When he became overwhelmed with emotion upon hearing Ja'far ؓ recite the Qur'an, An-Najaashee showed that his beliefs regarding 'Eesa (Jesus) ؑ were correct. Years later, the Prophet ﷺ praised An-Najaashee when he ﷺ said, "Indeed, today a righteous man from Abyssinia has died, so come and pray over him."^[2]

Second, at the time, Abyssinia was a land of prosperity; it was a trading center to which the Quraish traveled. While discussing the reasons for the migration to Abyssinia, At-Tabaree wrote, "The Quraish would go to Abyssinia to do business. There, they would find abundant sustenance, safety, and good business."

Third, and perhaps most importantly, the Quraish had no authority in Abyssinia. The Prophet's Companions ؓ could not migrate to any place within the Arabian Peninsula, since for the most part, and on most occasions, Arab tribes within the Peninsula obeyed the Quraish. They humbled themselves before the Quraish because they needed their help during the *Hajj* season, and they relied on them for trade. Moreover, they too opposed the Prophet's *Da'wah*, and so they were natural allies of

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam, with the commentary of Hammaam Abu Sa'leek (1/413).

^[2] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Funeral Prayers, chapter "Lining up for Funeral Prayers." *Hadeeth* number: 1320.

the Quraish. Therefore, there was no safe haven for the Muslims within Arabia. Abyssinia, on the other hand, was an ideal place for the Prophet's Companions ﷺ to seek sanctuary. Unlike the tribes of Arabia, the people of Abyssinia did not revere or fear the Quraish; the people of Abyssinia did not even adhere to the same religion as the Quraish, for they were Christians. In short, the Quraish had practically no influence on the political affairs of Abyssinia.

Finally, the Prophet ﷺ knew Abyssinia and loved it. In a *Hadeeth* that is related by Az-Zuhree, it is mentioned that Abyssinia was the land to which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ most loved to migrate. That love was perhaps founded upon many reasons:

- ◆ An-Najaashee was a just ruler.
- ◆ Abyssinians were Christians, and so they were closer to Islam than the polytheists of Arabia. That is why the believers became overjoyed when the Christians defeated the Magian polytheists of Persia, during a battle which occurred in the year 8 of Prophethood, while the Prophet ﷺ was still in Makkah.
- ◆ The Prophet ﷺ had knowledge about life in Abyssinia. His nursemaid was Umm Aiman ؓ, who, according to established reports in *Saheeh Muslim* and other *Hadeeth* compilations, was Abyssinian. It is related by Ibn Shihaab, as well as in *Sunan Ibn Maaajah*, that Umm Aiman ؓ once prepared a dish that the Prophet ﷺ had not seen before. He ﷺ asked her, "What is this?" She ؓ said, "It is food that we make in our land, and I wanted to make a loaf of it for you." Given that Umm Aiman ؓ was the Prophet's nursemaid, which means that she spent a lot of time with him during his childhood, it is not unlikely that she spoke to the Prophet ﷺ about her homeland, its society, and its rulers.

The Secrecy of their Departure

Those of the Prophet's Companions ؓ who went to Abyssinia on the first of the two famous migrations to that land departed from

Makkah in Rajab, five years after the beginning of the Prophet's mission. The travelling party consisted of ten men and four women – though it has been said that there were five women. As is indicated in the narration of Al-Waaqidee, they left secretly. Once the Quraish found out about their departure, they gave chase, but by the time they reached the sea, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ had already set sail, and were safely on their way towards Abyssinia.

Upon the Companions' arrival in Abyssinia, An-Najaashee gave them a warm and hospitable welcome. For the first time since they embraced Islam, they felt safe and free. Umm Salamah ﷺ, one of the Prophet's wives, said, "When we stopped to reside in the land of Abyssinia, we lived alongside the best of neighbours, An-Najaashee. We safely practiced our religion, and we worshipped Allah ﷻ without consequently being harmed. And we did not hear anything that we disliked."^[1]

The Names of Those Who Migrated to Abyssinia on the First of the Two Famous Migrations to that Land

The following is a list of the men who made the journey:

- ◆ 'Uthmaan ibn (son of) 'Affaan ibn Abee Al-'Aas ibn Umayyah ibn 'Abd-Shams ﷺ.
- ◆ 'Abdullah ibn 'Auf ibn 'Auf ibn 'Abd ibn Al-Haarith ibn Zuhrah ﷺ.
- ◆ Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awaam ibn Khuwailid ibn Asad ﷺ.
- ◆ Abu Hudhaifah ibn 'Utbah ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Abd-Shams ﷺ.
- ◆ Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ibn Haashim ibn 'Abd-Manaaf ibn 'Abdud-Daar ﷺ.
- ◆ Abu Salamah ibn 'Abdul-Asad ibn Hilaal ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar ibn Makhzoom ﷺ.
- ◆ 'Uthmaan ibn Madh'oon ibn Habeeb ibn Wahb ibn

^[1] Refer to *Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad* (1/201, 202).

Hudhaafah ibn Jumh ؓ.

- ◆ 'Aamir ibn Rabee'ah, who was from the tribe of 'Anz ibn Waail, and who was allied to the family of Al-Khattaab ؓ.
- ◆ Suhail ibn Baidaa, whose full name is Suhail ibn Wahb ibn Rabee'ah ibn Hilaal ibn Uhaib ibn Dabbah ibn Al-Haarith ؓ.
- ◆ Abu Sabrah ibn Abee Ruhm ibn 'Abdul-'Uzzah ibn Abee Qais 'Abd-Wudd ibn Nadr ibn Maalik ibn Hisl ibn 'Aamir ؓ.

These are the Female Members of the Travelling Party

- ◆ Ruqayyah ؓ, daughter of the Prophet ﷺ.
- ◆ Sahlah bint (daughter of) Suhail ibn 'Amr ؓ, one of the children of 'Aamir ibn Luai Sahlah ؓ was travelling with her husband, Abu Hudhaifah ؓ; while in Abyssinia, she gave birth to his son, Muhammad ibn Abu Hudhaifah ؓ.
- ◆ Umm Salamah bint Abu Umayyah ibn Al-Mugheerah ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar ibn Makhzoom ؓ. She was travelling with her husband, Abu Salamah ؓ.
- ◆ Lailah bint Abu Hathahmah ibn Hudhaafah ibn Ghaanim (ibn 'Aamir) ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Auf ibn 'Ubaid ibn 'Uwajj ibn 'Adee ibn Ka'ab ؓ. She was travelling with her husband, 'Aamir ibn Rabee'ah ؓ.
- ◆ Umm Kulthoom bint Sahl ibn 'Amr ibn 'Abd-Shams ؓ. She was travelling with her husband, Abu Sabrah ibn Abu Ruhm.^[1]

It seems that they did not travel as one group, for it is related that 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan ؓ and his wife, Ruqayyah (daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ) ؓ, were the first among them to migrate. Ya'qoob ibn Sufyaan ؓ related that, "After (Prophet) Loot ؓ, 'Uthmaan ؓ was the first to perform migration with

^[1] *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/ 96, 97), *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (1/344-352), and *Al-Hijrah Fil Qur'an* (pgs. 292-294).

his family.”^[1]

It is interesting to note that not a single one of the migrants was a slave, even though it was the slaves – such as Bilaal ؓ, Khabbaab ؓ, and ‘Aamir ؓ – who were tortured more severely than anyone else. In fact, most of those who migrated were from the noble classes of Quraish society; true, they were persecuted for their beliefs, but no one was persecuted more severely than slaves. Therefore, had fleeing from harm been the only reason for the migration, Muslim slaves would have been the first to migrate once the opportunity presented itself to them. Ibn Ishaq and other historians discussed in great detail Quraish’s persecution of Muslim slaves, but not a single one of them mentioned the name of any Muslim slave among the list of those who migrated to Abyssinia.

Hence the migration was prompted by reasons other than that of fleeing from hardship. It is important to note that those who went weren’t from a single clan; rather, every, or at least almost every, clan of the Quraish had at least one member who migrated to Abyssinia. This reality might have served to protect them, had the Quraish been able to convince An-Najaashee to extradite his Muslim guests, since every clan would have it in their best interests to protect the life of one of their members. Another benefit of them being from various clans was that their departure gave pause for thought to every member of the Quraish, in that it was their severe treatment that forced their relatives to leave their homeland. It is related that, years later, ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattaab’s heart softened towards Muslims when he ؓ met outside of Makkah a female Muslim who was migrating to Al-Madeenah. Finally, as Sayyid Qutub mentioned in *Adh-Dhilaal*, Muslims were intent on spreading the message of Islam outside of Makkah as well; perhaps, they surely felt, their *Da’wah* efforts would reap more blessed fruits in Abyssinia than they did in Makkah.

^[1] *As-Sunnah* by Ibn ‘Aasim, pg. 592, and *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/67). Also, refer to *Fathul-Baaree*, in the explanation of *Hadeeth* number: 3872.

Why Muslims Returned To Makkah From Abyssinia

The false story of Al-Gharaaneeq

Some historians and *Mufasssiroon* ascribe the return of the Muslims to Makkah from Abyssinia to a myth that has found currency mainly in the books of Orientalists, who intentionally try to circulate it so that they can make the claim that it is an established incident in the Prophet's biography. It is a myth because it is based on unauthentic narrations.

According to the myth, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting down one day beside the Ka'bah, and he ﷺ began to recite *Soorah An-Najm*, until he ﷺ reached the saying of Allah ﷻ:

﴿أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ ۝١٩ وَمَنَاةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْأُخْرَىٰ ۝٢٠﴾

"Have you then considered Al-Laat, and Al-'Uzzaa (two idols of the pagan Arabs), And Manaat (another idol of the pagan Arabs), the other third?" (Qur'an 53: 19, 20)

Then, it is falsely claimed, he ﷺ recited, "These are the higher *Al-Gharaaneeq* (*Gharaaneeq* is the plural of *Gharnooq*, a crane bird; here, the idols of the polytheists – which the polytheists claim grant them intercession – are being compared to birds that soar high up in the sky), and indeed, their intercession is hoped for." To this, the polytheists responded, "Never before this day has he spoken well about our gods, and indeed, we know that it is Allah Who provides sustenance, Who gives life, and Who causes death; yet it is our gods that intercede (on our behalf) with Him." Then, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached the Verse of prostration, he ﷺ and His Companions ﷺ performed prostration – and so did all of the polytheists, with the exception of an old man, who raised a handful of pebbles to his forehead and performed prostration on them. It is claimed that the polytheists then treated the Messenger of Allah ﷺ well and refrained from harming the Muslims. News of this incident reached the Muslims who were in Abyssinia, and so feeling that they could now peacefully and safely worship

Allah ﷻ alongside the Quraish, they returned to Makkah. It is further claimed that when the Quraish said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Will you not give our gods a share (in your religion), so that we can then support you," the Prophet ﷺ returned to his home and remained there until the evening. Jibreel ﷺ then went to him and recited to him *Soorah An-Najm*. Jibreel ﷺ then said, "And have I come to you with these two words," by which he meant, "These are the higher *Gharaaneeq*, and their intercession is hoped for." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ became very sad and afraid of his Lord, and Allah ﷻ then revealed to him this Verse:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّى أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ فَيَنْسَخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ ءَايَتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٢﴾﴾

"Never did We send a Messenger or a Prophet before you, but; when he did recite the Revelation or narrated or spoke, Shaitaan (Satan) threw (some falsehood) in it. But Allah abolishes that which Shaitaan (Satan) throws in. Then Allah establishes His Revelations. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise." (Qur'an 22: 52)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then resumed disparaging their gods, and they resumed persecuting him ﷺ and the Muslims. That, in summary, is the myth, which is not based on authentic narrations. In *Al-Fath*, Imam Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) speaks at length about this issue; he even, supposing some parts of this story to be true, mentioned plausible interpretations that shed a clearer light on what happened. According to one such interpretation, it was *Shaitaan* (Satan) who the polytheists heard uttering the two above-mentioned phrases. This interpretation is supported by the above-mentioned Verse, in which Allah ﷻ makes it clear that it is *Shaitaan* (Satan) who "Threw (some falsehood) in it." Also, Imam Ibn Hajar, as well as others, pointed out that it is impossible for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to have uttered such false words as are ascribed to him in the aforementioned myth.

The true reasons that prompted Muslims to return to Makkah

Three months after Ja'far ؓ and his companions ؓ arrived in Abyssinia, a great change occurred in Makkah, a change that made Muslims much more sanguine regarding the prospect of spreading Islam within Makkah. That change was brought about when, within the span of a few days, two strong and fearless men embraced Islam: Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ, uncle of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ. At first, Hamzah ؓ embraced Islam out of loyalty to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, but shortly thereafter Allah ﷻ opened up his heart to Islam, upon which he ؓ remained firm until he attained martyrdom during the Battle of Uhud – may Allah be pleased with him. Hamzah ؓ was strong and was much feared on the battlefield. When he ؓ embraced Islam, the Quraish knew that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had obtained an additional protector, and so they lessened the intensity with which they persecuted him. 'Umar ؓ, who embraced Islam a few days later, was also strong and brave. Muslims felt that they had gained honor and protection with the Islam of Hamzah ؓ and 'Umar ؓ, so much so that they went about Makkah openly declaring their faith. Ibn Mas'ood ؓ said, "Verily, the Islam of 'Umar ؓ was a conquest, his migration (to Al-Madeenah) was a victory, and his caliphate was a mercy (to the Muslims). Verily, we would not pray beside the Ka'bah until 'Umar ؓ embraced Islam. Then, when he embraced Islam, he fought with the Quraish and then prayed beside the Ka'bah, and we prayed (there) with him."^[1]

Ibn 'Umar ؓ reported that when 'Umar ؓ embraced Islam, he ؓ said, "Which member of the Quraish is quickest in spreading news," or in other words: Who among the Quraish is the biggest gossipmonger? Someone said that he was a man named Jameel ibn Ma'mar Al-Jumahee. 'Umar ؓ went to meet him, and 'Umar's son, 'Abdullah ؓ, followed him to see what would happen.

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/365).

When he met Jameel, 'Umar ؓ said, "O Jameel, did you know that I have indeed embraced Islam and have entered into the fold of Muhammad's religion?" No sooner did 'Umar ؓ finish his question than Jameel stood up, dragging his robe as he hastily walked away. 'Umar ؓ followed Jameel, and 'Abdullah ؓ followed 'Umar ؓ. Jameel was of course heading for the *Masjid*, for the Quraish congregated in their various social gatherings around the Ka'bah. As soon as he reached the Ka'bah, Jameel called out as loudly as he possibly could, "Lo! The son of Al-Khattaab (i.e., 'Umar ؓ) has forsaken his religion." 'Umar ؓ called out from behind Jameel, "He has lied; rather, I have embraced Islam and have testified that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah ﷻ and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger." The Quraish attacked him, but he fought back. All by himself, 'Umar ؓ fought them and continued to fight them until close to nightfall, at which time everyone was exhausted, and the fight ended.

In short, the situation of the Muslims changed for the better after both Hamzah ؓ and 'Umar ؓ embraced Islam. Muslims were now for the first time able to pray beside the Ka'bah; furthermore, they left the house of Al-Arqam ibn Abee Al-Arqam - which hitherto served as their secret meeting place - and went about Makkah openly declaring their faith. The Quraish no longer persecuted Muslims as brutally as they did before. News of such changes must have reached the Prophet's Companions ؓ in Abyssinia, either by way of a messenger or by way of seamen who passed through Jeddah, which is situated near Makkah.

To be sure, the exiled Muslims in Abyssinia became overjoyed upon hearing news of positive developments in Makkah; consequently, they desired to return, which should come as no surprise, for Allah ﷻ has instilled into human beings an inherent love of their homeland. And in the case of the Muslims in Abyssinia, they not only longed to see their homeland and be with their families, but also they longed to be near the Ka'bah and in the company of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Though it is true that the situation of the Muslims improved greatly with the Islam of Hamzah ؓ and 'Umar ؓ, Quraish's leaders didn't take the new developments sitting down. Instead, they plotted new strategies to fight Islam, strategies that showed cunning on the one hand, and brutality on the other. Those strategies culminated in the siege and economic embargo that we have hitherto discussed in this work. Therefore, with renewed attacks from the Quraish, some of the Prophet's Companions ؓ migrated to Abyssinia for a second time. This time around, however, many more Companions ؓ made the journey.

The second Migration to Abyssinia

After the Muslim exiles returned to Makkah from the first migration to Abyssinia, they found that, though their arrival home was preceded by some positive developments, the situation had again deteriorated. Their fellow clansmen inflicted them with constant torture, as if to punish them for having left in the first place. And so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave them permission to migrate to Abyssinia for a second time.

Ibn Ishaaq and others related that either 82 or 83 men made the journey the second time around – either 82 or 83 depending on whether 'Ammar ibn Yaasir ؓ was among them. 18 women made the journey as well; of these, 11 were members of the Quraish. Their children traveled with them as well, and some of the women gave birth to children during their sojourn in Abyssinia.

The Leaders of the Quraish Seek to Obtain the Extradition of their fellow Tribesmen from Abyssinia

When they heard about how the Prophet's Companions ؓ had found a safe haven in Abyssinia, the leaders of the Quraish became more frustrated than perhaps ever before. They were not content to allow the Muslims to have a moment's peace, never mind constant peace in a foreign land. And so they plotted a scheme to bring back their fellow tribesmen, a scheme that completely backfired, that led to a poignantly beneficial

discussion between An-Najaashee and Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ, and that ended with An-Najaashee embracing Islam and the Muslims being permanently welcome to live in peace in Abyssinia. Umm Salamah bint Abu Umayyah ibn Al-Mugheereah ؓ, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, said, "When we stopped to reside in the land of Abyssinia, we lived alongside the best of neighbours, An-Najaashee. We safely practiced our religion, and we worshipped Allah ﷻ without consequently being harmed. And we did not hear anything that we disliked. When news of our situation reached the Quraish, they conspired to send two strong men to deal with us. They planned to give An-Najaashee gifts from the merchandise that would catch his eye in Makkah. The best thing that they would take to him from Makkah was leather, and so they gathered a great deal of leather for him. Furthermore, they planned to give gifts to every single one of An-Najaashee's ministers. With the command to execute this plan, the Quraish sent 'Abdullah ibn Abee Rabee'ah ibn Al-Mugheerah Al-Makhzoomee and 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ibn Waail As-Sahmee. They (the leaders of the Quraish) gave them these instructions: 'Give each minister his gift before you speak to An-Najaashee regarding them (the Prophet's Companions ؓ). Then present to An-Najaashee his gifts, and then ask him to surrender them (the Prophet's Companions ؓ) to you, and make sure he does so before he speaks to them.' The two of them then left until they reached An-Najaashee; meanwhile, we were with him, in the best of homes and with the best of neighbours. Before speaking to An-Najaashee, they (the two emissaries of the Quraish) gave every single minister his gift. And to each minister they said, 'Verily, foolish youths from among us have inclined to come to the country of your king; they have abandoned the religion of their people, and they have not entered into the fold of your religion. Instead, they have come with a newly invented religion, one that neither we nor you know. The noblemen of their people, from their fathers and uncles, have sent us to the king, asking that he send them back. So when we speak to the king regarding their situation, advise him to surrender them to us and to not speak to them, for indeed, their people are best suited to deal with them, and they are

most knowledgeable about that which they find blameworthy in them.' The ministers said, 'Yes (we will do as you ask).' The two of them then proffered to the king their gifts, which he accepted from them. They then said to him, 'O king, verily, foolish youths from among us have inclined to come to your country; they have abandoned the religion of their people, and they have not entered into the fold of your religion. Instead, they have come with a newly invented religion, one that neither we nor you know. The noblemen of their people, from their fathers and uncles and fellow clansmen, have sent us to you, asking that you send them back. For indeed, they (the noblemen of the Quraish) are best suited to deal with them, and they are most knowledgeable about that which they find blameworthy in them and that concerning which they reproach them.' 'Abdullah ibn Abu Rabee'ah and 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas disliked nothing more than for An-Najaashee to hear what they (i.e., the Prophet's Companions ﷺ) had to say. The king's ministers, who were gathered around him, said, 'O king, these two have spoken the truth. Their people are best suited to deal with them, and they are most knowledgeable about that which they find blameworthy in them, so surrender them to these two (men). Let these two take them back to their country and to their people.' An-Najaashee became angry and said, 'No, by Allah. To the contrary, I will not surrender them to these two, and I do not fear the plotting of a people who have become my neighbours, have settled down in my country, and have chosen me (to grant them refuge) over every other person – at least I will not do so until I summon them and ask them concerning that which these two say about them. If they are as these two say, I will surrender them to these two, and I will send them back to their people. But if they are otherwise (i.e., if they are not as these two men claim), then I will protect them from these two, and I will be a good neighbour to them, so long as they remain a neighbour to me.'"^[1]

^[1] Related by Ahmad (5/290), who said, "Its chain is authentic"; *Hadeeth* number: 22498.

A Heartfelt discussion between Ja'far ﷺ and An-Najaashee

An-Najaashee then summoned the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. When his messenger informed the Prophet's Companions ﷺ that they were to appear before the king, they gathered together to discuss what they should do. One of them asked, "What will you say to the man (i.e., An-Najaashee) when you go to him?" They all agreed on what they would say to him: "By Allah, we will say what our Prophet ﷺ taught us and commanded us with, regardless of the consequences." Meanwhile, An-Najaashee called for his priests, who gathered around him with their scrolls spread out before them. When the Muslims arrived, An-Najaashee began by asking them, "What is this religion for which you have parted from your people? You have not entered into the fold of my religion, nor the religion of any person from these nations (i.e., from the nations of the world)."

Umm Salamah related, "The person among us who would speak to him was Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ, who then said, 'O king, we were an ignorant people: we worshipped idols, we would eat from the flesh of dead animals (i.e., animals that died not through slaughtering, but due to some other cause), we would perpetrate lewd acts, we would cut off family ties, and we would be bad neighbours; the strong among us would eat from the weak (i.e., would oppress the weak and eat from their labour). We remained upon that state until Allah sent to us a Messenger, whose (noble) lineage, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and chastity we already knew (to be impeccable). He invited us unto Allah – to believe in His Oneness and to worship Him; to abandon all that we and our fathers worshipped besides Allah ﷻ, in terms of stones and idols (and all else besides). He ﷺ commanded us to speak truthfully, to fulfill the trust, to join ties of family relations, to be good to our neighbours, and to refrain from forbidden deeds and from shedding blood. And he ﷺ forbade us from lewd acts, from uttering falsehood, from (wrongfully) eating the wealth of an orphan, from falsely accusing chaste women of wrongdoing. And he ﷺ ordered us to worship Allah alone and to not associate any

partners with Him in worship; and he commanded us to pray, to give *Zakaat* (compulsory charity), and to fast.' He enumerated for An-Najaashee the teachings of Islam. (He said,) 'And we believe him and have faith in him. We follow him in what he came with. And so we worship Allah alone, without associating any partners with Him in worship. We deem forbidden that which he has made forbidden for us, and we deem lawful that which he made permissible for us. Our people then transgressed against us and tortured us. They tried to force us to abandon our religion and to return from the worship of Allah to the worship of idols; they tried to make us deem lawful those abominable acts (and things) that we used to deem lawful (during the days of ignorance). Then, when they subjugated us, wronged us, and treated us in an oppressive manner, standing between us and our religion, we came to your country, and we chose you over all other people. We desired to live alongside you, and we hoped that, with you, we would not be wronged, O king.' An-Najaashee said to Ja'far ﷺ, 'Do you have with you any of that which he (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) came with from Allah?' Ja'far ﷺ said, 'Yes.' 'Then recite it to me,' said An-Najaashee. Ja'far ﷺ recited for him the beginning of the Chapter: *Kaaf-ha-Yaa-'Ain-Sad*. By Allah, An-Najaashee began to cry, until his beard became wet with tears. And when his priests heard what Ja'far ﷺ was reciting to them, they cried until their scrolls became wet (with tears).' An-Najaashee then said, 'By Allah, this and what Moosa ﷺ came with come out of the same lantern (i.e., come out from the same source). Then by Allah (he said turning to Quraish's two emissaries), I will never surrender them to you, and henceforward they will not be plotted against and tortured (by me sending them back to their people).'"^[1]

Another attempt to Create a Rift between An-Najaashee and his Muslim Guests

Describing what happened after the aforementioned discussion between An-Najaashee (may Allah have mercy on him) and Ja'far

^[1] *Musnad Imam Ahmad* (1/202, 203).

ibn Abee Taalib ؓ, Umm Salamah ؓ said, "When both 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas and 'Abdullah ibn Abee Rabee'ah left the presence of An-Najaashee, 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas said, 'By Allah, tomorrow I will present to him (i.e., An-Najaashee) (information) about them with which I will pull up by the roots their very lives.' 'Abdullah ibn Rabee'ah, who was the more sympathetic of the two towards us, said, 'Do not do so, for they have certain rights of family relations, even if they have opposed us.' 'Amr said, 'By Allah, I will inform him that they claim that 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam ؑ is a slave.' He went to the king on the following day and said, 'O king, verily, they have strong words to say about 'Eesa ibn Maryam ؑ. Call them here and ask them (to tell you) what they say about him.' An-Najaashee sent for them in order to ask them about 'Eesa ؑ. Nothing similar to this befell us ever before. The group (of Muslims) gathered together and said to one another, 'What will you say about 'Eesa when he asks you about him?' They said, 'By Allah, we will say about him that which Allah says and that which our Prophet ﷺ came with, regardless of the outcome. When they entered into his presence, he said to them, 'What do you say about 'Eesa ibn Maryam?' Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ said, 'We say about him that which our Prophet ﷺ came with – that he is the slave of Allah, His Messenger, a spirit created by Him, and His Word ("Be!" – and he was), which He bestowed on Maryam (Mary), the virgin, the *Al-Batool* (one who dedicates oneself to worship and forsakes marriage).' An-Najaashee struck his hand on the ground and took from it a stick. He then said, 'Eesa ibn Maryam did not go beyond what you said even the distance of this stick (i.e., what he ؑ said and what you say is the same).' When he said this, his ministers spoke out in anger, to which he responded, '(What I said is true) even if you speak out in anger, by Allah. (Turning to the Muslims, he said) Go, for you are safe in my land. Whoever curses you will be held responsible. Then whoever curses you will be held responsible. And I would not love to have a reward of gold in return for me hurting a single man among you. (Now speaking to his ministers or guards:) Return to these two (men) their gifts, since we have no need of them. For by Allah,

Allah did not take from me bribe money when He returned to me my kingdom, so why should I take bribe money (for going against His command, for giving up these Muslims, etc.) The two (emissaries) left, defeated and humiliated; and returned to them were the things they came with. We then resided alongside An-Najaashee in a very good abode, with a very good neighbour.”^[1]

An-Najaashee embraces Islam

An-Najaashee believed in the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, and he embraced Islam. But knowing that his people were firmly set upon their false and misguided ways, and were intransigently clinging to their false beliefs, An-Najaashee kept his faith hidden from them. Abu Hurairah ؓ narrated that, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced the death of An-Najaashee on the very same day that he died (so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ found out about his death through revelation). He took his Companions ؓ to the place of prayer and lined them up. And he made four *Takbeers* (*Takbeer* is to say, *Allahuakbar* – Allah is the Greatest) over him (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ performed the funeral prayer over An-Najaashee).”^[2] In another narration, Jaabir ؓ said, “When An-Najaashee died, the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Today, a righteous man has died, so stand and pray over your brother, Ashamah (An-Najaashee was the title of every king of Abyssinia, just as Caesar was the title of every Roman emperor; the name of this particular An-Najaashee, or king, was Ashamah).’”^[3] According to most historians, An-Najaashee – may Allah have mercy on him – died in the year 9 H; however, some historians maintain that he died in the year 8 H, prior to the conquest of Makkah.

^[1] *Musnad Imam Ahmad* (1/203). The narrators of this are all narrators of *As-Saheeh*, and the *Hadeeth* number is: 1740.

^[2] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Funeral Prayers, chapter, “Making four *Takbeers* over the Deceased”; *Hadeeth* number: 1333.

^[3] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of the *Ansaar’s* Merits, chapter “The Death of An-Najaashee”; *Hadeeth* number: 3888.

Lessons and Morals

- 1) A believer puts the needs of his soul before the needs of his body; he strives to fulfill his soul's needs, even if doing so must come at the expense of his body's needs and desires. Consider, for example, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ and how they remained steadfast upon their beliefs, even though they paid a heavy price for doing so by being tortured and persecuted. For them, peace of mind and the expectation of receiving reward from Allah ﷻ were of greater importance than being safe from torture, hardships, and persecution. It is through such sacrifices that religious and political movements succeed, and the masses are saved from darkness and misguidance.
- 2) The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was extremely merciful towards his Companions ﷺ. Knowing that he ﷺ could not save them from persecution in Makkah, he ﷺ searched out for other means of securing their safety and freedom, which is why he ﷺ told them to go to Abyssinia and to An-Najaashee, in whose presence "no one is wronged." As such, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sending a message to Muslim leaders of all generations: They should, with wisdom and farsightedness, find means of protecting those under them and of finding safe havens for Muslims who are being persecuted in their own land.
- 3) The presence of the Prophet's cousin, Ja'far ﷺ, his son-in-law, 'Uthmaan ﷺ, and his daughter, Ruqayyah ﷺ, among the Muslim migrants established an important principle: The close relatives of a leader must brave dangerous circumstances just as other people do. If the relatives of a leader and those from the wealthy classes are kept at a safe distance from danger, while common or poor Muslims face dangerous circumstances head on, then true brotherhood among Muslims cannot be achieved.
- 4) If one fears for his religion, then it is legislated in Islam to

leave one's homeland, even when that homeland is a superior place, such as Makkah, and when one's destination is not a stronghold of Islam, such as Abyssinia. It is interesting to note that Abyssinia was inhabited by Christians who worshipped 'Eesa ﷺ and who did not say that 'Eesa ﷺ is the slave of Allah ﷻ, as becomes clear from a close reading of Umm Salamah's narration. Allah ﷻ praised those who migrated to Abyssinia when He ﷻ said: "And the first to embrace Islam. Here, Allah ﷻ praised them even though they were travelling away from the Inviolable House of Allah in order to live in a land of disbelief; this is because they migrated to safeguard their religion and to be able to worship Allah ﷻ in complete freedom. The ruling that applied to the Prophet's Companions ﷺ applies to Muslims from all generations: Whenever evil becomes widespread in a country, whereby one is not able to practice Islam in safety, one must, if one is able to, travel to another country in which he can worship Allah ﷻ without fearing persecution for doing so. That is the kind of migration that will continue to remain legislated until the Day of Resurrection. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُولُوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ (١١٥)

"And to Allah belong the east and the west, so wherever you turn yourselves or your faces there is the Face of Allah (and He is High above, over His Throne). Surely! Allah is All-Sufficient for his creatures' needs, All-Knowing." (Qur'an 2: 115)

- 5) When doing so is necessary, it is permissible for Muslims to enter into the protection of non-Muslims, regardless of whether the protector is a Christian, such as An-Najaashee, or a polytheist, such as those who granted protection to Muslims who returned from Abyssinia. We know that, throughout his entire life, Abu Taalib, a die-hard polytheist, protected and supported the Prophet ﷺ. And when the Prophet ﷺ returned from At-Taaif, he entered Makkah under the protection of Mut'im ibn 'Adee. Obviously, however, one

may enter under the protection of a non-Muslim only if doing so does not require one to compromise one's religion. When Abu Taalib asked the Prophet ﷺ not to make him take on more than he could handle and not to speak disparagingly about the idols of the Quraish, the Prophet ﷺ reconciled himself to the idea of foregoing Abu Taalib's protection, for he ﷺ outright refused to remain silent about anything that he ﷺ was Islamically required to speak about.

- 6) That the Prophet ﷺ chose Abyssinia proves that he ﷺ was well-informed about current affairs. The Prophet ﷺ knew which empires were corrupt and which were not; and he ﷺ knew which rulers were oppressive and which were just. Based on that knowledge, he ﷺ chose the best possible place for his Companions ﷺ, Abyssinia. The lesson for Muslim leaders from all centuries is that they must not delude themselves into thinking that they live in a vacuum; they live in a world that is inhabited by other peoples; they must base their strategies upon that reality, and to do so, they must be well-informed about current affairs.
- 7) For various reasons, the Quraish wanted to obtain extradition of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ from Abyssinia. One of the main reasons was that they felt that, having found a safe haven in a foreign land, the Muslims threatened their future interests. That is why today, and during any period wherein Muslims are very weak, no sooner do Muslims try to find a safe haven than they can call their own country, than the polytheists make every effort possible to stop them. And in this regard, Muslims must not underestimate those who would wish to destroy them. Consider the detailed planning of the Quraish: They sent valuable gifts to An-Najaashee and his ministers, they agreed beforehand on the words they would speak to accompany those gifts, and they sent 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas, who was a friend of An-Najaashee. From this we learn that it is never wise to underestimate our enemies.

- 8) When the messenger of the king informed the Prophet's Companions ﷺ that they were being summoned by the king, they did not panic or become afraid. Rather, they applied an important Islamic principle, which is that Muslims should mutually consult one another in affairs that concern them all. The minds of many people working together are better than the minds of many people working as individuals, often at cross-purposes. Moreover, they displayed the wonderful fruits of the Prophet's training, in terms of how they all agreed to speak the truth, regardless of what happened as a result. They firmly resolved to present Islam with honour, even if that would lead to their destruction.
- 9) Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ was wisely chosen to lead the Muslims in Abyssinia and to speak on their behalf to An-Najaashee, for someone of at least equal intelligence to 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas was needed to debate him before the king. Ja'far ﷺ was an ideal representative of the Muslims for various reasons. First, having lived with the Prophet ﷺ under the same roof, Ja'far ﷺ was very close to him, and probably knew him ﷺ better than any other Muslim in Abyssinia. Second, Ja'far ﷺ was eloquent, the exact quality that was needed in presenting the Muslims' case to An-Najaashee. Third, Ja'far ﷺ was of a very noble lineage, and so An-Najaashee could not be led to believe that a rebellion in Makkah was being orchestrated by runaway slaves or members of the lower classes. Ja'far ﷺ was from the children of Haashim, and the children of Haashim had a nobler lineage than anybody else from the Quraish. Fourth, Ja'far ﷺ was the cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a fact that surely made An-Najaashee confident that Ja'far ﷺ was truthfully conveying the message of the Prophet ﷺ. Finally, Ja'far's character was, like his lineage, very noble indeed. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once said to Ja'far ﷺ, "You have resembled me in my physical appearance and in my character."^[1] In short, Ja'far ﷺ epitomized the ideal

^[1] Related by Bukhaare, the Book of Reconciliation; *Hadeeth* number: 2269.

ambassador, one that is endowed with eloquence, knowledge, good manners, patience, bravery, and wisdom.

- 10) When you are dealing with someone who is cunning, you have to send a person who is at least of equal intelligence, a person who can outwit him. For example, if a non-Muslim wants to debate religious issues, Muslims should send to him someone of at least equal intelligence, someone who is knowledgeable about Islam and the non-Muslim debater's religion, and, just as importantly, someone who is eloquent enough to express his ideas clearly. In this context, let us study 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas's tactics and how Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib responded to them. 'Amr began by giving An-Najaashee a sense of how things had become chaotic in Makkah, and of how the Quraish had become a divided people as a result, 'Amr claimed, of the Prophet's *Da'wah*. As an official emissary of the Quraish, 'Amr hoped to gain the sympathy of a ruler who surely knew all too well the effects of dissent and inner strife within a country. 'Amr then continued to speak ill of the Prophet's Companions, insinuating (in narrations other than those that I have mentioned) that, just as they had sown dissension among the Quraish, they were capable of creating much mischief in Abyssinia. Had it not been for their close friendship and the close ties between the king and the Quraish, 'Amr implied that he would not have taken the trouble to warn the king about Quraish's runaways. And of course 'Amr remembered to mention that the Prophet's Companions did not share the same beliefs as An-Najaashee, in that they did not bear witness to the divinity of 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam. They even, 'Amr pointed out, did not respect An-Najaashee, for whereas everyone in his presence performed prostration to him, they remained standing in upright positions. It was now up to Ja'far to refute all of 'Amr's claims, and Ja'far rose to the occasion, speaking at once with heart and with the rhetorical skill of a seasoned ambassador. In his speech to the king, Ja'far did the following:

- ◆ He ﷺ enumerated the faults of pre-Islamic ignorance, intending thereby to convince An-Najaashee that the Quraish were a decadent and corrupt people. And in doing so, he ﷺ concentrated on those faults that could be remedied only through Prophethood and revelation from Allah ﷻ.
- ◆ Ja'far ﷺ then contrasted Quraish's corrupt ways with the wonderful and noble character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was known among the Quraish for his noble lineage, his truthfulness, his trustworthiness, and his chastity. He ﷺ was, therefore, ideally suited to the duties of Prophethood.
- ◆ Ja'far ﷺ expounded on the wonderful teachings of Islam, which are in harmony with the teachings of previous Prophets ﷺ – such as forsaking the false worship of idols, speaking truthfully, being trustworthy, joining ties of family relations, being good to one's neighbour, avoiding the wrongful spilling of blood, establishing prayer, and giving charity. It was very appropriate to mention these teachings, since An-Najaashee and his priests, being deeply immersed in Christian beliefs and practices, would recognize in them the teachings of past Prophets ﷺ, going back to 'Eesa and Moosa ﷺ.
- ◆ Perhaps most importantly, Ja'far ﷺ exposed Quraish's vile policy of persecuting Muslims simply because they refused to worship idols and stood firm in their worship of Allah alone.
- ◆ Ja'far ﷺ praised An-Najaashee for his good qualities: That he was a just ruler and that no one was wronged in his presence.

Ja'far ﷺ pointed out that, from all of mankind, the Muslims chose to seek An-Najaashee's help; this clearly refuted 'Amr's claim that the Muslims had no respect for An-Najaashee, and at the same time, it instilled into An-Najaashee a sense of responsibility and duty towards his Muslim guests. Having made the above-mentioned points, Ja'far ﷺ was appealing to An-Najaashee's mind, heart, and sense of justice, and he successfully refuted all of 'Amr's claims.

When An-Najaashee later asked him to recite some of the

Qur'an, Ja'far ﷺ chose the best Chapter possible considering both the situation and his audience. He ﷺ chose *Soorah* (Chapter) *Maryam* (Mary), which discusses Maryam ﷺ and 'Eesa ﷺ, and which made An-Najaashee (may Allah have mercy on him) and his priests cry so much that their beards and scrolls became soaked in tears. Ja'far ﷺ explained that Muslims do not worship 'Eesa ibn Maryam ﷺ or consider him to be a god of any sort. That being the case, Ja'far ﷺ made it clear that Muslims don't attack the chastity of Maryam ﷺ, as do members of another religion, but instead honour her, saying that Maryam ﷺ was a chaste and pure virgin who dedicated herself to the worship of Allah ﷻ and that her son, 'Eesa ﷺ, is Allah's Word (Allah ﷻ said, "Be!" – and he was) and a soul created by Allah ﷻ, which He ﷻ bestowed upon Maryam ﷺ. And much to the chagrin of his ministers, An-Najaashee agreed with everything that Ja'far ﷺ said.

In the end, An-Najaashee weighed what he heard and became convinced that Ja'far ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were truthful; he resolved upon a firm course: No matter what the consequences, he (may Allah have mercy on him) would support Muslims and their cause.

- 11) The attitude of Ja'far ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ represented a practical application of the Prophet's saying, "Whosoever seeks the pleasure of Allah, while displeasing people in the process, then Allah will suffice him, so that he does not need financial help from people. And whosoever seeks the pleasure of people, while displeasing Allah in the process, then Allah will entrust him to people (so that they will harm him)."^[1] Ja'far ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ sought the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, even though it seemed very likely that, by doing so, they would incur the wrath of their Christian hosts. In the end, Allah ﷻ provided them with the

^[1] *Sunan At-Tirmidhee*, the Book of Az-Zuhd, *Tuhfatul-Ahwadhee* (7: 97), *Saheeh Al-Jaamai' As-Sagheer* (5973).

- help and support of An-Najaashee, who also took a big risk by speaking the truth, since he knew fully well that his people might consequently start a rebellion against him.
- 12) Some Christians were true Monotheists, but they kept that fact hidden, fearing reprisals from their coreligionists. One such example was An-Najaashee, who kept secret his true faith to save his life and his kingdom. But when he was then tested through the arrival of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, he outwardly displayed his true faith, seeking the Pleasure of Allah ﷻ, regardless of the outcome.
 - 13) One of the lessons we learn from the Companions' migration to Abyssinia is that, until clear proofs are established for one's benefit, one is excused for one's ignorance. Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "When the prayer of a resident (one who is not travelling) was increased (in the number of units) after the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah, there were those who were far away from him, such as those who were in Makkah, or those who were in Abyssinia. They continued to pray two units (until news reached them about the increase of units), and the Prophet ﷺ did not order them to repeat the prayers (they performed that were two units short of the newly legislated four-unit prayer)."^[1] Imam Adh-Dhahabee (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "No one sins until he has knowledge and until the proof is established (upon him). Some prominent Companions (of the Prophet ﷺ) were in Abyssinia while (the legislations of) obligatory deeds and forbidden deeds were being revealed to the Prophet ﷺ. News of those legislations reached them only months later; regarding those legislations, they were excused because of their ignorance (concerning those issues), but only until news of revelation reached them."^[2]
 - 14) The primary migration of the Muslims during the lifetime of the

^[1] *Al-Fataawah* (22/43).

^[2] *Al-Kabaair*, pg. 12.

Prophet ﷺ, and the migration that truly changed the course of Islamic history, was the migration of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ to Al-Madeenah. Allah ﷻ praised those of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ who migrated to Al-Madeenah; that notwithstanding, those who migrated to Abyssinia are similarly praiseworthy – even though they joined the Prophet ﷺ in Al-Madeenah only after the conquest of Khaibar – for they performed two migrations, one to Abyssinia, and one to Al-Madeenah. And they remained behind in Abyssinia only because they were needed there. Abu Moosa Al-Ash'aree ﷺ, one of those who migrated to Abyssinia, said: "Asmaa bint 'Umais ﷺ – who had arrived with us (from Abyssinia) – entered upon Hafsah ﷺ, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, to visit her. Asmaa ﷺ was among those who had migrated to An-Najaashee. While Asmaa ﷺ was with Hafsah ﷺ, 'Umar ﷺ entered upon Hafsah ﷺ. When he saw Asmaa ﷺ, 'Umar ﷺ said, 'Who is this?' 'Asmaa bint 'Umais,' said Hafsah. 'Umar ﷺ said, 'She is the Abyssinian? The one who traveled by sea (to get to Abyssinia)?' Asmaa ﷺ said, 'Yes.' 'Umar ﷺ said, 'We performed *Hijrah* (migration to Al-Madeenah) before you did, and so we have a greater right to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ than you do.' Becoming angry, Asmaa ﷺ said, 'No, by Allah. You were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who would feed the hungry among you and admonish the ignorant among you; meanwhile, we were far away and detested (i.e., perhaps meaning that some Christians in Abyssinia detested them, for it is related that a small rebellion took place against An-Najaashee after he declared his faith in Islamic Monotheism; the rebellion was quickly quelled and stability was restored) in the land of Abyssinia. And we were in that situation for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. By Allah, I will neither eat food nor have anything to drink until I mention what you said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. We would be harmed and we were afraid, and I will mention that to the Prophet ﷺ and ask him about it. By Allah, I will not lie, stray from the truth, or add to it (i.e., to what you said, or to the severity of the situation we endured).' When the Prophet ﷺ

came, Asmaa ؓ said, 'O Prophet of Allah, verily 'Umar says such and such (she mentioned what he had said).' The Prophet ﷺ asked, 'And what did you say to him?' She ؓ said, 'I said such and such to him.' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'He has no greater right to me than all of you do. He ؓ and his Companions ؓ have a single migration (that they performed); but as for you, the people of the boat, you have two migrations (that you have performed).' Asmaa (later) said, 'I then saw Abu Moosa ؓ and the people of the boat (i.e., those who had migrated to Abyssinia), coming to me in groups and asking me about this *Hadeeth* (i.e., about what the Prophet ﷺ had told her). And there was nothing in the world that made them happier or that was more important to them than what the Prophet ﷺ said to them (i.e., about them).''^[1]

- 15) 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ, one of the two emissaries sent by the Quraish to seek the extradition of the Prophet's Companions ؓ, later embraced Islam. To be sure, the fact that the Prophet's Companions ؓ migrated to Abyssinia had a tangible and positive influence on 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ. Many narrations indicate that 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ embraced Islam at the hands of An-Najaashee (may Allah have mercy on him); this view, Ibn Hajar said^[2], is the most widely held of the two views in the matter. If it is true that 'Amr ؓ embraced Islam at the hands of An-Najaashee, then it is, as Az-Zarqaanee pointed out^[3], a unique occurrence in Islamic history, for it did not otherwise occur that a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ embraced Islam at the hands of someone who wasn't a Companion (An-Najaashee is not officially referred to as a Companion because he never actually met or saw the Prophet ﷺ). However, some narrations indicate that 'Amr ؓ embraced Islam at the hands not of An-Najaashee (may Allah have mercy on him), but of Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ.

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree (4230, 4231), and Muslim (2503).

^[2] Refer to *Al-Hijrah Al-Oolah Fil-Islam* (pg. 167).

^[3] Refer to *Sharh Al-Mawaahib* (1/271).

- 16) While some of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ were in Abyssinia, one among them, Umm Habeebah ﷺ, married the Prophet ﷺ. The actual marriage contract took place while she was in Abyssinia, a fact that is established in the books of *Sunnah*. Abu Daawood related in his *Sunan* with an authentic chain that Umm Habeebah ﷺ was married to 'Ubaidullah ibn Jahsh ﷺ, who died in the land of Abyssinia. An-Najaashee then married her off to the Prophet ﷺ, gave her 4000 (units of a currency that is not explicitly mentioned in the narration), and sent her to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with Shurahbeel ibn Hasanah ﷺ.^[1]

This marriage points to how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would take care of his followers in Abyssinia. Umm Habeebah ﷺ had lost her husband and was left all alone; the Prophet ﷺ not only consoled her for her loss, but further honoured her by offering to marry her. In terms of how the Prophet ﷺ took care of female migrants, Umm Habeebah ﷺ is not the only example we have. Earlier on, the Prophet ﷺ similarly consoled and honoured Saudah ﷺ. When Saudah ﷺ returned to Makkah from Abyssinia with her husband, As-Sakraan ibn 'Amr ﷺ, the latter died. When Saudah's period of waiting ended, the Prophet ﷺ sent for her and proposed to her. Saudah ﷺ chose Haatib ibn 'Amr ibn 'Abd-Shams ibn 'Abd-Wudd, a member of the same clan, to give her hand in marriage to the Prophet ﷺ. Saudah ﷺ was the first woman that the Prophet ﷺ married after the death of Khadeejah ﷺ. The Prophet's marriages to both Saudah ﷺ and Umm Habeebah ﷺ wonderfully illustrate how the Prophet ﷺ married women for reasons that pertained to the spreading of Islam and to the taking care of bereaved Muslim women. Perhaps one of the aims of marrying Umm Habeebah ﷺ was to lessen the severity of her clan's enmity towards Islam – she was from the Banu Umayyah clan – and of their leader in particular, Abu Sufyaan, who was Umm

^[1] *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood* by Al-Albaanee – may Allah have mercy on him (2/396); *Hadeeth* number: 2107.

Habeebah's father. It is not a rare occurrence in the *Seerah* that the Prophet ﷺ tried to win over the hearts of the Quraish, so long as the means he ﷺ used did not clash with Islamic values or laws.

- 17) Some researches have listed some of the potential reasons why the Prophet ﷺ did not himself migrate to Abyssinia. Some of those reasons are as follows:

- ◆ It is established (in a narration we will come across later on in this work, *In Sha Allah*) that the Prophet ﷺ saw in a dream the land to which he ﷺ was going to migrate. That land, he ﷺ saw, was filled with date-palm trees and was situated between *Harratain* (two areas of land that are replete with volcanic rock). And of course, Abyssinia did not fit that description.
- ◆ In terms of its geographical location, Abyssinia was not strategically suited as a stronghold from which Islam could spread to the various parts of Arabia and the rest of the world.
- ◆ The native Christian dwellers of Abyssinia were not going to allow Islam to spread on a widespread scale in their country; nor were the Romans, who were leaders of all Christians at the time, going to allow Abyssinia to fall into the control of Muslims. Therefore, it was not practicable for the Prophet ﷺ to migrate to Abyssinia and spread from there the message of Islam; Al-Madeenah and Arabia were best suited for that purpose.

- 18) The migration to Abyssinia had the effect of lowering the status of the Quraish within the Arabian Peninsula. Arabs in general prided themselves in providing shelter to strangers and being generous to their guests; in fact, they competed to outdo one another in those regards. Now, here were outsiders from Abyssinia providing shelter to strangers who had been harmed, persecuted, and expelled by their own people – the Quraish. This certainly had the effect of lowering the status of the Quraish in the eyes of more than a few Arabs.

The Year Of Grief, And The Trial Of At-Taaif

The Year Of Grief

1) The Death of Abu Taalib

Abu Taalib died during the end of the tenth year of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, shortly after the end of the hitherto discussed three year siege and embargo; it is quite likely that the harsh conditions of living under a siege and an embargo had a deleterious effect on Abu Taalib's health. The Quraish honoured Abu Taalib, but his loyalties were divided. On the one hand, he was a die-hard polytheist who remained loyal to the ways of his forefathers; and on the other hand, he loved the Messenger of Allah ﷺ a great deal, so much so, in fact, that he supported him and protected him from his fellow *Qurashee* noblemen until his dying breath.

When Abu Taalib was on his deathbed, breathing his final breaths, the leaders of the Quraish visited him, and so did the Prophet ﷺ. The former tried to convince him to remain steadfast upon the religion of his forbears, saying, "Do you wish to turn away from the religion of 'Abdul-Muttalib?" Meanwhile, the Prophet ﷺ was trying to convince Abu Taalib to embrace Islam, saying, "Say: None has the right to be worshipped but Allah. On the Day of Resurrection, I will testify with it (with the phrase of Islamic Monotheism) for you." Abu Taalib said, "Were it not for

the fact that the Quraish would dishonour me for it, saying that it was only restlessness that made me say it, I would have given you delight by saying it." Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾ (٥٦)

"Verily, You (O Muhammad ﷺ) guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided." (Qur'an 28: 56)

The beliefs of the Quraish were too deeply entrenched in Abu Taalib's mind for him to now discard them. Like many old men, Abu Taalib found it hard to change his way of thinking. Making matters worse, his compeers from Quraish's nobles were present while he was dying, instilling fear into him by threatening to disgrace his name if he accepted Islam.^[1]

2) The Death of Khadeejah ﷺ

Khadeejah ﷺ died in the same year that Abu Taalib died, about three years before the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah. With the death of Abu Taalib and then of Khadeejah ﷺ, two of his closest supporters, the Prophet ﷺ went through a tough period of sadness. Through crises and emergencies, Abu Taalib was always there as an external supporter, fending off the attacks of the Quraish; and Khadeejah ﷺ was always there as a more personal supporter, consoling and encouraging the Prophet ﷺ through all of his hardships.

Once Abu Taalib died, the Quraish became more brazen in their persecution than ever before: now even common members of the Quraish began to persecute the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ had no helper left save Allah ﷻ, yet he ﷺ continued to invite people to Islam, and as a result had to put up with hardships that are hard to imagine. When the situation reached its nadir, the Prophet ﷺ

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* by Al-'Umaree (1/184).

decided to move away from his homeland, to present his message to people outside of his tribe, hoping for their support and readiness to believe in and accept the message that he came with from Allah ﷻ. And so the Prophet ﷺ went to At-Taaif, the closest city to Makkah.

The Prophet's journey to At-Taaif

In inviting his people to Islam, the Prophet ﷺ followed the way of previous Prophets ﷺ and Messengers ﷺ, such as Nooh ﷺ, who spent "a thousand years less fifty years" (Qur'an 29: 14) inviting his people to Islam. Throughout those long years, Nooh ﷺ worked consistently and patiently, repeating his message over and over again, using various means to reach out to his people. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْنِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝١ قَالَ يَقَوْمِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ۝٢ أَنْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَأَتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُوا ۝٣ يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُخْرِجَكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ ۚ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝٤ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا ۝٥ فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَايَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ۝٦ وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصْوَاعَهُمْ فِيْٓ أَفْئَادِهِمْ ۚ وَاسْتَعْصَفُوا نِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصْرُوا ۚ وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا اسْتِكْبَارًا ۝٧ ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جَهَارًا ۝٨ ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا ۝٩﴾

"Verily, We sent Nooh (Noah) to his people (saying): "Warn your people before there comes to them a painful torment." He said: "O my people! Verily, I am a plain warner to you, That you should worship Allah (Alone), be dutiful to Him, and obey me. He (Allah) will forgive you of your sins and respite you to an appointed term. Verily, the term of Allah when it comes, cannot be delayed, if you but knew." He said: "O my Lord! Verily, I have called my people night and day (i.e., secretly and openly to accept the doctrine of Islamic Monotheism). But all my calling added nothing but to (their) flight (from the truth). And verily!

Every time I called unto them that You might forgive them, they thrust their fingers into their ears, covered themselves up with their garments, and persisted (in their refusal), and magnified themselves in pride. Then verily, I called to them openly (aloud); then verily, I proclaimed to them in public, and I have appealed to them in private." (Qur'an 71: 1-9)

Despite the long duration of his mission, Nooh ؑ never stopped trying to convince his people to embrace Islam; his resolve never weakened, nor did he tire of resorting to different means to convince his people of the truth. He ؑ invited them by day and by night, and he ؑ preached to them both in public and in private.

Prophet Muhammad ؐ too invited people by day and by night, both in public and in private. He ؐ informed people about previous nations; he explained certain aspects of Islam through the mention of parables; he both warned and gave glad tidings; in short, he ؐ did all that he could to convince his people of the truth. Then, when remaining among his people became too difficult to bear, he ؐ went to Taaif, and later to Al-Madeenah, always continuing to invite others to Islam.

The Messenger of Allah ؐ was looking for a new place from which to spread the message of Islam. He ؐ was looking for help from the Thaqeef tribe in At-Taaif, but instead of helping him, they sent out their children and foolish ones to pelt him with stones. After being on the receiving end of such harsh treatment, the Prophet ؐ did not rest for even a short while; in fact, he ؐ even performed *Da'wah* on his way back from Taaif. For on his way back, the Prophet ؐ met 'Addaas, who was a Christian. The Prophet ؐ invited 'Addaas ؑ unto Allah ؑ, and the latter embraced Islam. In regard to the Prophet's trip to At-Taaif, Al-Waaqidee said that it took place in Shawaal, in the tenth year of Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood. Al-Waaqidee mentioned that the Prophet ؐ stayed in At-Taaif for a period of ten days.^[1]

^[1] *Tabaqaat Ibn Sa'd* (1/221), the author of which was relating from *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* (1/185).

Why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose At-Taaif

At-Taaif was of great strategic importance to the Quraish, so much so, in fact, that the leaders of the Quraish had ambitions to take control of it. Prior to the advent of Islam, the Quraish made attempts to annex At-Taaif; in the process, they took control of the valley of Wajj, desiring it for its trees and vegetation. The native dwellers of At-Taaif, the Thaqeef tribe, began to fear the Quraish, and so they allied themselves to them and added to the alliance the children of Daus. As a result of the close ties between the residents of At-Taaif and Makkah, many rich inhabitants of Makkah owned property in At-Taaif, and they would spend time there during the hot summer season. Among Quraish's subtribes, Banu Haashim and 'Abd-Shams in particular had close relations with the people of At-Taaif. And the children of Makhzoom had shared financial interests with members of the Thaqeef tribe.

The Prophet ﷺ chose At-Taaif for an important strategic reason, for if he ﷺ would be able to find support there, Quraish's financial and political interests would be directly threatened. In fact, had Thaqeef lent their support to the Prophet ﷺ, the Quraish would perhaps have become isolated in the Arabian Peninsula. The strategically sound choice of At-Taaif proves that the Prophet ﷺ strove to establish a Muslim country, for to have a country is one of the greatest of means for a nation to spread its religion. When the Prophet ﷺ reached At-Taaif, he ﷺ went directly to the central authority of the Thaqeef.

Where was the Leadership of the Thaqeef Based?

At-Taaif was controlled not by one individual or group but by an alliance of two groups: Banu Maalik and Al-Ahlaaf. These two groups gained control of At-Taaif by dint of their early settlement there. They enjoyed complete control of At-Taaif, both politically and economically, yet they did not have enough power to defend At-Taaif from foreign invaders. Of all Arab lands, At-Taaif was perhaps the most fertile and rich, and so it attracted the attention of any tribe that had the ability to conquer it. The residents of At-

Taaif therefore feared every nearby tribe that was powerful enough to defeat them in battle; those tribes were the Hawaazin, the Quraish, and Banu 'Aamir.

To protect themselves, the leaders of At-Taaif formed alliances and signed peace treaties; it was the very same tactic that the Quraish resorted to in order to ensure control over Makkah. Banu Maalik strengthened their ties with the Hawaazin, and Al-Ahlaaf formed an alliance with the Quraish.

To be sure, the Prophet ﷺ was fully aware of these fragile alliances, fragile because the people of At-Taaif did not form them out of loyalty, but because they feared the Hawaazin and the Quraish. He ﷺ also knew that the leadership of At-Taaif was not in the hands of a single person or tribe, but was distributed among two tribes, by virtue of an agreement between them. Each one of those two tribes was allied to a stronger outside tribe. If the Prophet ﷺ would be able to win over one of those two tribes, the entire power balance in the region would shift. And in particular, if he ﷺ would be able to win over the Al-Ahlaaf, who were allied to the Quraish, he ﷺ would achieve a tremendous victory. And it was not an impossible goal, for the Al-Ahlaaf were allied to the Quraish not so much out of religious loyalty as out of fear.

Given the above-mentioned political realities, the Prophet ﷺ, upon entering At-Taaif, went directly not to the children of Banu Maalik, who were allied to the Hawaazin, but to the children of 'Amr ibn 'Umair, the leaders of the Al-Ahlaaf who were allied to the Quraish. In his *As-Seerah*, Ibn Hishaam said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached At-Taaif, he ﷺ headed to a group of people from the Thaqeef who were, in those days, the chiefs and nobles of the Thaqeef (Tribe). They were three brothers: 'Abd Yaa-Lail ibn 'Amr ibn 'Umair, Mas'ood ibn 'Amr ibn 'Umair, and Habeeb ibn 'Amr ibn 'Umair ibn 'Uqdah ibn Gheerah ibn 'Auf ibn Thaqeef. With one of them was a woman from the Quraish – more particularly, from the children of Jumh. The children of 'Amr (the three brothers and their relatives) were very cautious and very afraid (of the Quraish and other Arab tribes), and so they didn't

answer the invitation of the Messenger ﷺ. Instead, they acted extremely foolishly, showing bad manners to the Messenger ﷺ. And so, having lost hope of finding any goodness in Thaqeef, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood up to leave them and said to them, 'If you will do what you are doing (i.e., if you will disbelieve in Islam), then keep my matter a secret.'"^[1] The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not want his people to find out about his *Da'wah* efforts in At-Taaif, for knowledge thereof would arouse their anger and their desire for retribution. The Prophet ﷺ wanted to keep his *Da'wah* efforts a secret from the Quraish, and he ﷺ, as in other instances, was very cautious and careful about his movements and actions. In regard to his trip to At-Taaif, the Prophet ﷺ did the following:

- ◆ He ﷺ left Makkah on foot, so that no one who might see him would think that he intended to leave Makkah. Had the Prophet ﷺ left on horseback, he would have provoked his people's suspicion and interest; and the leaders of the Quraish would probably have attempted to stop him from leaving.
- ◆ For more than one reason, the Prophet ﷺ chose Zaid ؑ to accompany him on his journey. First, Zaid ؑ was the adopted son of the Prophet ﷺ, so if anyone saw the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ؑ together on one of the roads that left Makkah, that person's suspicion would not be aroused. Second, the Prophet ﷺ knew that he ﷺ could trust Zaid ؑ, whom he knew for his sincerity, trustworthiness, and truthfulness. The Prophet ﷺ therefore knew that Zaid ؑ would not spread the secret of their intended destination. Finally, the Prophet ﷺ knew that he could rely on Zaid ؑ as a travel companion. And Zaid ؑ proved to be a most helpful and caring travel companion, for when the people of At-Taaif were pelting the Prophet ﷺ with stones, Zaid ؑ acted as a shield, getting hit himself in order to protect the Prophet ﷺ. As a result of his selfless and valiant effort to protect the Prophet ﷺ, Zaid ؑ suffered a fracture.

^[1] *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (2/72).

- ◆ When the leaders of At-Taaif answered the Prophet's *Da'wah* with derision and disbelief, the Prophet ﷺ did not become angry or answer in like manner; instead, he ﷺ asked them to keep his visit a secret. This was an important precautionary step on his part, for if the Quraish came to know about his visit, they wouldn't stop short at deriding him and disbelieving in him; they would also increase the intensity with which they persecuted him ﷺ.

A heartfelt Supplication

The children of 'Aamir were a treacherous people; instead of keeping their meeting with the Prophet ﷺ a secret, they let loose their foolish ones and their slaves, who went after the Prophet ﷺ, cursing him and pelting him with stones. As a result, the Prophet's heels bled, his shoes became bloodstained, and his pure blood poured down onto the ground of At-Taaif. The crowd continued to pursue their victims until they forced the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ؓ to seek refuge in a nearby garden that belonged to 'Utbah and Shaibah, the two sons of Rabee'ah – both of whom were at the time present inside of their garden. It was only then that the crowd returned to At-Taaif.

The Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ؓ rested under the shade of a tree; meanwhile, the two sons of Rabee'ah, who were hidden from the view of the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ؓ, watched them from a distance and saw what the people of At-Taaif had done to them.

During this moment of sadness and pain, the Prophet ﷺ made the following supplication to his Lord, a supplication that is full of faith, contentment, and a strong desire to please Allah ﷻ:

"O Allah, to You do I complain of the weakening of my strength, of my few options, of the way people humiliate me, O Most-Merciful of the merciful ones. You are the Lord of the weak ones, and You are my Lord. To whom will You entrust me? To a distant (stranger) who will show me an unwelcoming face, or to an enemy, whom You have given control over my situation? If You are not angry with me, then I do not mind, though safety from

You is easier for me. I seek refuge with the Light of Your Face, which brings light to darkness, and upon which the affairs of the world and the Hereafter become right – from Your anger descending upon me, or Your displeasure befalling me. I will continue to seek Your Pleasure, until You become pleased (with Me). And there is neither might nor power except with You.”^[1]

Through this supplication, we can get a sense of the depth of the Prophet’s faith. His sole desire was to please Allah ﷻ. He ﷺ did not become sad because he ﷺ wanted to protect himself from harm or because he ﷺ wanted peace and comfort; to the contrary, he ﷺ found pleasurable any inconvenience or hardship he ﷺ was subjected to for the sake of Allah ﷻ. At the same time, he ﷺ feared that he might have been negligent in some way when it came to spreading Islam, and that Allah ﷻ might be displeased with him. The Prophet’s chief aim, therefore, was to please Allah ﷻ. So if he ﷺ had to endure hardships in order to achieve Allah’s Pleasure and be saved from Allah’s anger, then he ﷺ welcomed hardships, for in that case, hardships became a form of blessing from Allah ﷻ.

The Prophet ﷺ ended his supplication by saying a wonderfully profound phrase that he ﷺ taught his Companions ؓ to say: “There is neither might nor power except with Allah ﷻ.” In that phrase, the word *Hawl* is loosely translated as meaning ‘might’; what it specifically means, however, is a change from one state to another. Therefore, nothing changes from one state to another in the universe except by the permission of Allah ﷻ. Among the meanings of this phrase is that a believer does not change from a condition of distress to one of comfort, or from a condition of fear

^[1] In *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah As-Saheehah* (1/186), Dr. Al-‘Umaree expressed the view that this *Hadeeth* is weak; however, Ibraaheem Al-‘Alee maintains that it is authentic, explaining that there is another *Hadeeth* that testifies to it and hence strengthens it. He mentioned it in his book, *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 136). Dr. ‘Abdur-Rahmaan ‘Abdul-Hameed Al-Birr, professor of *Hadeeth* and its sciences in Azhar University, is of the view that, through its various chains, the *Hadeeth* is strong and acceptable. He discussed its chains in his book, *Al-Hijrah An-Nabawiyyah Al-Mubaarakah*, pg. 38.

to one of safety, except by the will and permission of Allah ﷻ; furthermore, the believer has no strength to face hardships and endure difficulties, unless Allah ﷻ helps him.

Supplication is one of the greatest forms of worship. A Muslim often faces circumstances that are difficult to bear, or problems that he does not know how to solve. The only option he has to get out of his difficulties is to turn to Allah ﷻ and supplicate to Him. After the Prophet ﷺ was treated harshly and despicably by the people of At-Taaif, he ﷺ turned to Allah ﷻ and made the above-mentioned supplication. No sooner did he ﷺ finish invoking Allah ﷻ than Allah ﷻ answered his supplication by sending to him Jibreel ﷺ and the Angel of the Mountains.

The Prophet's Mercy and Compassion

Even in harsh circumstances, the Prophet ﷺ displayed compassion and mercy. When a person is treated in a brutal and despicable manner, he becomes hardened by that treatment, and as a result becomes cynical; not so regarding the Prophet ﷺ, for it was his mercy and not his anger that he ﷺ displayed in such circumstances.

‘Aishah ؓ, the Mother of the Believers, related that she once asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, “Has a day come upon you that was harder than (the day of) Uhud (i.e., the Battle of Uhud)?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “I had to face what I faced from your people, and the worst treatment I received from them took place on the day of Al-‘Aqabah, when I presented myself to Ibn ‘Abd Yaa-Lail ibn ‘Abd Kulaal (from Thaqeef, from the people of At-Taaif). He did not accept what I invited him to, and so I left in the direction that faced me in a distressed state. I did not come back to myself (i.e., I did not realize where I was or where I was going, so sad was I) until I was at Qarn Ath-Tha’aalib (it is a place that is today called As-Sail Al-Kabeer; it is the Meeqaat – place to stop and enter into the inviolable state of being a pilgrim – for the people of An-Najd). I then raised my head, only to see that a cloud was giving me shade. I looked and saw in it (i.e., in that cloud) Jibreel, who then

called me and said, 'Allah has indeed heard what your people said to you, and what they responded to you (when you invited them to Islam). Allah has indeed sent to you the Angel of the Mountains (i.e., the Angel whom Allah appointed over the mountains) so that you can order him to do whatever you want to them (i.e., if you want, the Angel of the Mountains will crush them with mountains).' The Angel of the Mountains then called me and extended greetings of peace to me. He then said, 'O Muhammad,' after which he said, 'It is as you please. If you want me to make Al-Akhshabain (two mountains in Makkah) fall upon them (i.e., upon the people of Makkah) (then that is what I will do).'" The Prophet ﷺ said to him, "I instead hope that Allah will bring out from their progeny those who will worship Allah alone, without associating anything (i.e., any partner) with Him."^[1]

What the Prophet ﷺ was afflicted with on the Day of Uhud was perhaps physically harder upon him; but in his mind and heart, the Day of At-Taaif was more severe and more intense. So immersed was the Prophet ﷺ in distress that he ﷺ walked from At-Taaif to Qarn Ath-Tha'aalib, completely oblivious to all that was around him.

Bringing About Change in a People

The Angel of the Mountains suggested crushing the people of Makkah with two mountains, a form of destruction that was applied on previous disbelieving nations, such as the people of Nooh, 'Ad, Thamood, and Loot. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَغْرَقْنَا وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٥١﴾﴾

"So We punished each (of them) for his sins, of them were some on whom We sent Hasiban (a violent wind with shower of stones)

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of the Beginning of Creation, chapter, "When One of You Says: 'Aamee'"; *Hadeeth* number: 3231.

[as the people of Loot (Lot)], and of them were some who were overtaken by As-Saihaḥ [torment – awful cry, etc. (as Thamood or Shu'aib's people)], and of them were some whom We caused the earth to swallow [as Qar'un (Korah)], and of them were some whom We drowned [as the people of Nooh (Noah), or Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and his people]. It was not Allah Who wronged them, but they wronged themselves." (Qur'an 29: 40)

Another suggestion was offered as well: That the Prophet ﷺ continue on his *Hijrah* (migration), steering a course far away from the people of Makkah and At-Taaif; the former forced him to leave, and the latter forsook him. It was Zaid ibn Haarithah ؓ who made this second suggestion. Ibn Al-Qayyim said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ found no helper in At-Taaif, he ﷺ returned to Makkah, feeling sad; and with him was his freed slave, Zaid ibn Haarithah ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ then invoked Allah ﷻ with a supplication that is famously known (it is mentioned in a previous section), after which his Lord ﷻ sent to him the Angel of the Mountains, who asked the Prophet ﷺ to command him to crush the people of Makkah with Al-Akhshabain – two mountains between which lies Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'No, rather I will proceed slowly (and patiently and deliberately) with them. Perhaps Allah will bring out from their progeny those who will worship Him, without associating any partner with Him.' (Without entering Makkah immediately) the Prophet ﷺ sojourned at Nakhlah for a number of days. Zaid ibn Haarithah ؓ said to him, 'How can you enter upon them when they (i.e., the Quraish) have forced you to leave. And you went out seeking help, but you were not helped (i.e., by the people of At-Taaif).' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'O Zaid, indeed Allah will provide relief and a way out from (the situation) you see (right now). And indeed, Allah will support and help His religion, and will grant victory to His Prophet.'" ^[1]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ refused both to have his people

^[1] *Zaad Al-Ma'ad* (2/46).

destroyed and to continue on his migration in search of another land. His vision of the future was guided by the light of *Eemaan* (faith). In spite of the apparent dangers that surrounded him, the Prophet ﷺ chose to reenter Makkah and continue his mission there. Even if his people were going to disbelieve in him, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ hoped that their progeny would take a different course, that they would worship Allah ﷻ alone. And so the Prophet ﷺ had clearly set his eyes on the future, which, however, in no way meant that he ﷺ was forgetting about or neglecting the present.

The Prophet ﷺ decided to enter Makkah, even though the prevailing circumstances indicated that reentry into his homeland was going to be neither easy nor safe. To be sure, news of what took place in At-Taaif reached Makkah's leaders. Knowledge of the Prophet's *Da'wah* activities in At-Taaif was going to have two potentially dangerous effects on the already volatile situation in Makkah. First, Quraish's leaders were surely going to be furious and frustrated, for the Prophet ﷺ was now looking for a safe haven outside of Makkah. If he ﷺ were to find one, they surely felt, he ﷺ would potentially gather forces to attack them. Fear of that eventuality was certainly going to cause panic among Quraish's leadership, panic that would incite them to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ. Second, the Quraish probably saw the events of At-Taaif as a great defeat of the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims, which would possibly have the effect of making them even more brazen in their persecution of the Muslims.

In *Zaad Al-Ma'aad*, Ibn Al-Qayyim wrote, "After the people of At-Taaif refused to believe in and help the Prophet ﷺ, and after he left At-Taaif, the Prophet ﷺ went to Hira. From there, he ﷺ sent for Al-Akhnas ibn Shareeq, asking that he grant him protection. Al-Akhnas replied, 'I am an ally (of the Quraish, and not one of its core members), and an ally cannot grant protection.' The Prophet ﷺ then sent for Suhail ibn 'Amr (with the same request). Suhail answered, 'Verily, the children of 'Aamir (of which he was a member) cannot grant protection over the children of Ka'ab.'

Next, the Prophet ﷺ sent for Mut'im ibn 'Adee, chief of the Banu Naufal ibn 'Abd Manaaf tribe (i.e., subtribe); to Mut'im, the Prophet ﷺ sent a messenger, a man from the Khuzaa'ah, with the message, 'Shall I enter into your protection?' Mut'im replied, 'Yes,' after which he summoned his children and his people. He said to them, 'Attire yourselves in armour and station yourselves around the corners of the House (i.e., the Ka'bah), for indeed, I have granted my protection to Muhammad.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Zaid ibn Haarithah entered (Makkah), heading straight for the Inviolable *Masjid*. (There in front of the Ka'bah) Mut'im ibn 'Adee sat up straight on his mount and called out, 'O people of Quraish, I have indeed granted my protection to Muhammad, so let no one among you make a move to harm him.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to *Ar-Rukn* (one of the corners of the Ka'bah) and embraced it. He ﷺ prayed two units of prayer, and then he returned to his home. Throughout (those tense minutes or hours), Mut'im ibn 'Adee and his children surrounded him, with their weapons (in hand), until he ﷺ entered his house."^[1]

Al-Akhnas and Suhail's answers to the Prophet's request were dubious at best. For had they not been able to provide protection to the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ would not have asked them to do so; after all, the Prophet ﷺ was fully aware of the customs and norms of his people. Az-Zarqaanee pointed out^[2] that Suhail's excuse is particularly suspect, for his grandfather, 'Aamir, was the brother of Ka'ab, and their father was Luai; therefore, they were both of equal status, making it possible and acceptable for each to grant protection over the refusal of the other.

The Prophet's method of entering Makkah changed what could otherwise have been an unmitigated disaster. Rather than immediately enter Makkah and risk death, the Prophet ﷺ procured the protection of a tribal chieftain and entered Makkah under the protection of armed men; meanwhile,

^[1] *Zaad Al-Ma'ad* (2/47).

^[2] *Muha*.

Quraish's leaders watched without being able to do anything about the situation.

Just as he helped bring an end to the hitherto discussed embargo and siege, Mut'im, a non-Muslim, helped the Prophet ﷺ enter Makkah. Yet some historians suggest that his motives were not altogether altruistic.

How so? The Prophet ﷺ chose a man from the Khuzaa'ah tribe to be his messenger to Mut'im. This was a subtle and profoundly wise strategy that the Prophet ﷺ employed, for there was a long and intense history between Mut'im's tribe, the Prophet's grandfather, and the Khuzaa'ah tribe. Mut'im was the leader of the Banu Naufal clan, which was previously headed by a man named Naufal. Naufal was an enemy of 'Abdul-Muttalib, grandfather of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Their enmity began when Naufal usurped some land that belonged to 'Abdul-Muttalib. Of course, Naufal's actions did not sit well with 'Abdul-Muttalib, and so the latter tried to arouse his clan against Naufal, but no one showed any real interest to help him. 'Abdul-Muttalib then wrote to his uncles (in Al-Madeenah) from the Khazraj; his letter consisted of a poem, in which he explained his situation and his need of their help. They responded to his plea for help; a large group of them traveled to Makkah and went to the courtyard of the Ka'bah, taking their weapons along with them. When Naufal saw them, he said, "It must be for some evil purpose that these (people) have come." They spoke to him about the situation and he became afraid, so afraid, in fact, that he forthwith returned to 'Abdul-Muttalib his land.

When the children of Khazraj came to the help of 'Abdul-Muttalib, the people of the Khuzaa'ah, who had become strong and powerful, said among themselves, "By Allah, we have never seen anyone in this valley who has a handsomer face, more complete manners, and a greater degree of forbearance than this person (i.e., 'Abdul-Muttalib). His uncles from the Khazraj have indeed helped him, and we too have given birth to him (a figure of speech, meaning: we too are related to him, for he is descended

from our forbears), just as they gave birth to him. His grandfather, 'Abd-Manaaf, was indeed chief of the Khuzaa'ah. If we show obedience to him, he will help us and form an alliance with us. We would consequently benefit from him and his people, and he would benefit from us." And so the leaders of the Khuzaa'ah went to 'Abdul-Muttalib and said, "O Abul-Haarith (i.e., 'Abdul-Muttalib), we have indeed given birth to you, just as people from Banu An-Najjaar (i.e., the Khazraj) have given birth to you (i.e., our forbears are your forbears, just as the forbears of Banu An-Najjaar are your forbears); furthermore, we are (your) neighbours. The passing of days has destroyed what malice there once was in the hearts of some of us against the Quraish. So come and we will ally ourselves to you." Their offer greatly pleased 'Abdul-Muttalib, who hastened to accept it; it was not, however, an alliance that included all of Quraish's sub-tribes; refraining from joining the alliance were the clans of Banu Naufal and 'Abd-Shams.

This story points to a historically deep-rooted enmity between the Khuzaa'ah and the Quraish. Generations earlier, the Khuzaa'ah had ruled Makkah; but then Qusai ibn Kilaab gathered members of the Quraish from various locations. Thus having brought unity to the Quraish, Qusai led his people in a war against the Khuzaa'ah, a war that ended in favour of the Quraish. The people of the Khuzaa'ah were expelled from Makkah, and Qusai partitioned Makkah into four districts, one district for each subtribe of the Quraish. Ever since that time, the Khuzaa'ah harboured deep hatred towards the Quraish. So when relations became strained between the Quraish and 'Abdul-Muttalib, the Khuzaa'ah formed an alliance with 'Abdul-Muttalib in order to punish and weaken the Quraish. What their delegates had said was a lie; the passing of days had not destroyed their malice and contempt for the Quraish, but rather preserved, if not intensified, it. That the Banu Naufal and 'Abd-Shams clans did not join in the alliance proves that it was not in their favour.

Now, for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to have sent a man from the

Khuzaa'ah to the leader of the Banu Naufal clan must have rekindled memories in Mut'im's mind about the above-mentioned historical events. Mut'im must have been reminded, by the arrival of the Khuzaa'ee messenger, of the alliance that was previously formed between 'Abdul-Muttalib and the Khuzaa'ah, an alliance that was opposed to his clan.

And so we can see what a brilliant move it was on the Prophet's part to send a man from the Khuzaa'ah. The Prophet ﷺ was sending a message that he ﷺ was not alone, that he could possibly do what his grandfather, 'Abdul-Muttalib, had done, in terms of forming an alliance with the Khuzaa'ah or seeking help from the Khazraj. Therefore, Mut'im decided to protect the Messenger of Allah ﷺ not just out of kindness, but also in order to protect his tribe. And the Quraish remained silent when the Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah not just because they were afraid of the Banu Naufal, but also because they were afraid of the Khuzaa'ah and Khazraj tribes.

We must not, however, forget that Mut'im was among those who brought an end to the oppressive embargo. And though, after the fact, we might search out for ulterior motives in Mut'im's actions, the Prophet ﷺ did not do so, but instead characteristically remembered his kind services. The Prophet ﷺ knew the danger to which Mut'im exposed himself and his children, all for the sake of protecting him. And that is why, on the Day of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ said the following words about the seventy prisoners that the Muslims captured: "Had Al-Mut'im ibn 'Adee been alive and spoken to me (i.e., interceded to me) concerning these foul ones, I would have left them for him (i.e., without taking ransom money for their release)."^[1]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ clearly distinguished between those non-Muslims who showed enmity to Islam and who fought against it, and those non-Muslims who supported Islam and were at peace with it. After all, it is not befitting for a Muslim, never

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4023).

mind a Prophet, to forget and deny the kind actions of others. The poet of the Prophet ﷺ, Hassaan ibn Thaabit ؓ, composed verses in which he praised Mut'im. The fact that the Prophet ﷺ did not reproach Hassaan ؓ for doing so coupled with the fact that the Prophet ﷺ himself praised Mut'im in the above-mentioned *Hadeeth*, clearly proves that, in Islam, the kind actions of people should be recognized and praised, even if those people are non-Muslims.

In regard to how the Prophet ﷺ procured the protection of Mut'im, we see how the Prophet ﷺ used the customs and norms of his society for the benefit of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ looked at individual disbelievers not as simpletons who all had the same motives, but as complex beings whose interconnectedness with other people made them have various, and sometimes conflicting, motives. Based on that understanding, the Prophet ﷺ was able to enter Makkah and continue spreading the message of Islam.

The Story of 'Addaas, the Christian, and of the Jinns who Embraced Islam

The Prophet's journey to At-Taaif reaped some blessed fruits, for the Prophet's message reached a young Christian youth named 'Addaas ؓ, who embraced Islam; and it also reached seven jinns, who embraced Islam and then returned to their fellow jinns in order to invite them to Islam.

The Story of 'Addaas ؓ

After the Prophet ﷺ invited the people of At-Taaif to Islam, they chased him out of their city and forced him to seek shelter in a garden that belonged to 'Utbah ibn Rabe'e'ah and Shaibah ibn Rabe'e'ah, two of Makkah's nobles. At the time, both 'Utbah and Shaibah were present in their garden, and though they were situated in a position from which they could see the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ did not see them (at least that is what is apparent from the narration). Upon seeing the Prophet's condition, 'Utbah and Shaibah's hearts softened towards him; they called for

'Addaas, a Christian slave of theirs, and said to him, "Take a bunch of these dates and put them in this tray; then go with the tray to that man and tell him to eat from it." 'Addaas did as he was told, and when he reached the Prophet ﷺ, he said, "Eat." When the Prophet ﷺ placed his hand in the tray, he ﷺ said, "In the Name of Allah," after which he ate. 'Addaas fixed his gaze directly on the Prophet's face and said, "By Allah, the people of these lands do not speak as you have just spoken." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "And from what country are you, O 'Addaas? And what is your religion?" 'Addaas said, "I am a Christian, and I am a man from the people of Neenawaa."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "From the town of the righteous man, Yunus ibn Mattah?" 'Addaas said, "And what makes you know about Yunus ibn Mattah?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "He is my brother. He was a Prophet, and I am a Prophet." 'Addaas ﷺ moved closer to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and began to kiss his head, his hands, and his feet." Meanwhile, though they could not hear the conversation that was taking place, 'Utbah and Shaibah clearly saw 'Addaas honouring the Prophet ﷺ by kissing his head, hands, and feet. One of the two brothers said to the other, "As for your servant, he (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) has corrupted him against you."

When 'Addaas ﷺ returned to 'Utbah and Shaibah, they said, "Woe upon you, O 'Addaas! Why did kiss that man's head, hands, and feet." 'Addaas ﷺ said, "O my masters, there is nothing on earth that is better than he is; he has indeed informed me about a matter that none know about except for a Prophet." They said to him, "Woe upon you, O 'Addaas! Do not let him make you turn away from your religion, for indeed, your religion is better than his religion."^[1]

One is blessed even when one practices the most basic and easy of Islam's teachings. Just by mentioning Allah's Name before eating, the Prophet ﷺ attracted 'Addaas to Islam. 'Addaas ﷺ was in fact

^[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pgs. 136, 137).

greatly moved by the Prophet's words, for he never before heard anyone in Arabia mention Allah's Name before eating. When one mentions Allah's Name before eating, or when one performs any Islamic practice, he distinguishes himself from those polytheists that are in his presence. Some polytheists will look at him, and one, or a few or more, of them might ask about that practice. Once a polytheist's attention has been piqued, a fruitful dialogue can take place, in the course of which the Muslim can present to him the teachings of Islam. Therefore, as Muslims, we should never hesitate to establish Islamic practices under any circumstances, but particularly when we are in the company of non-Muslims.

'Addaas's faith in the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was strong. Years later, when Shaibah and 'Utbah were preparing to go out to fight the Muslims in what was to become known as the Battle of Badr, they ordered 'Addaas ﷺ to accompany them. 'Addaas ﷺ said to them, "It is that man whom I saw in your garden that you want to fight? By Allah, the mountains would not rise up against him." They said, "Woe upon you, O 'Addaas. He has indeed bewitched you with his tongue."^[1]

'Addaas ﷺ earlier said to his two masters, "There is nothing on earth that is better than he is," a statement that was a great consolation for the Prophet ﷺ. Even if the Prophet's own people harmed him, a stranger from Iraq – more particularly, from Neenawaa – believed in him and honoured him. Allah ﷻ decreed for a man from a distant land to come to Arabia and believe in Allah and His Messenger, while the closest of people to the Messenger ﷺ disbelieved in him.

Jinns of Nusaibeen

When the Prophet ﷺ was returning from At-Taaif, having had lost hope of finding any goodness in the people of Thaqeef, he ﷺ stopped at An-Nakhlah. There, he ﷺ stood in the darkness of the night to pray. As he ﷺ was praying, a group of jinns passed by,

^[1] Refer to *Subul-Al-Huda War-Rashaad* (2/578).

jinns that Allah ﷻ mentioned in the Noble Qur'an. They were a total of seven jinns, and they were from the inhabitants of Nusaibeen. They listened closely to the recitation of the Messenger ﷺ, and they continued to do so until he ﷺ completed his prayer. They then returned to their people, warning them about the Hereafter. Those seven jinns believed in and answered the call of what they heard being recited. And Allah ﷻ told their story to the Prophet ﷺ, saying:

﴿وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِم مُّنْذِرِينَ ۖ قَالُوا يَنْقُومُنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَىٰ طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ۝٣٠﴾

"And (remember) when We sent towards you (Muhammad ﷺ) Nafran (three to ten persons) of the jinns (quietly) listening to the Qur'an, when they stood in the presence thereof, they said: "Listen in silence!" And when it was finished, they returned to their people, as warners. They said: "O our people! Verily! We have heard a Book (this Qur'an) sent down after Moosa (Moses), confirming what came before it, it guides to the truth and to a Straight Path (i.e., Islam)." (Qur'an 46: 29, 30)

Those jinns descended upon the Prophet ﷺ while he ﷺ was reciting the Qur'an. Upon hearing him, they said to one another, "Listen in silence!" The Prophet's message, which was rejected by the people of At-Taaif, was then passed on to the dwellers of another world, the world of the jinns. They learned about Islam from the Prophet ﷺ, and then returned to their fellow jinns as preachers (*Du'aat*), just as Abu Dharr Al-Ghaffaaree ؓ, At-Tufail ibn 'Amr ؓ, and Dimaad Al-Azdee ؓ returned to their respective peoples as preachers (*Du'aat*). Allah ﷻ related what the Muslim jinns said to their fellow jinns:

﴿يَنْقُومُنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ، يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرْكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ۝٣١﴾

"O our people! Respond (with obedience) to Allah's Caller (i.e., Allah's Messenger Muhammad ﷺ), and believe in him (i.e., believe in that which Muhammad ﷺ has brought from Allah and follow him). He (Allah) will forgive you of your sins, and will save you from a painful torment (i.e., Hellfire)." (Qur'an 46: 31)

Concerning the said jinns, Verses of the Qur'an were revealed that will continue to be recited until the Day of Resurrection:

﴿قُلْ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا ۝١
يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ فَمَا مِنَّا بِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَكِن شَرِكًا ۝٢ وَأَنَّهُ تَعَلَّىٰ جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ
صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا ۝٣ وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ سَفِيهُنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ شَطَطًا ۝٤ وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ
نَقُولَ الْإِنسَ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۝٥ وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ
الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا ۝٦ وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّنْ يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا ۝٧ وَأَنَّا لَمَسْنَا
السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مُلَمَّتًا حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهَبًا ۝٨ وَأَنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقْعَدًا
لِّلْمَسْمُوعِ فَمَنْ يَسْمَعُ آلَانِ يَحْدِثُ لَهُمْ شَهَابًا رَّصَدًا ۝٩ وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرُّ أَرِيدُ يَمُنُ فِي
الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا ۝١٠ وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِمَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ كُنَّا طَارِقِينَ
قَدْ دَا ۝١١ وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نَعِجَرَ اللَّهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَكِن تَعَجَّرَ هَرَبًا ۝١٢ وَأَنَّا لَمَّا
سَمِعْنَا الْمُدَىٰءَ آمَنَّا بِهِ فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَحَافُ بِخَسَا وَلَا رَهَقًا ۝١٣﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "It has been revealed to me that a group (from three to ten in number) of jinns listened (to this Qur'an). They said: "Verily! We have heard a wonderful Recital (this Qur'an)! It guides to the Right Path, and we have believed therein, and we shall never join (in worship) anything with our Lord (Allah). And exalted be the Majesty of our Lord, He has taken neither a wife, nor a son (or offspring or children). And that the foolish among us [i.e., Iblis (Satan) or the polytheists amongst the jinns] used to utter against Allah that which was wrong and not right. And verily, we thought that men and jinns would not utter a lie against Allah. And verily, there were men among mankind who took shelter with the masculine among the jinns,

but they (jinns) increased them (mankind) in sin and disbelief. And they thought as you thought, that Allah will not send any Messenger (to mankind or jinns). And we have sought to reach the heaven; but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. And verily, we used to sit there in stations, to (steal) a hearing, but any who listens now will find a flaming fire watching him in ambush. And we know not whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord intends for them a Right Path. There are among us some that are righteous, and some the contrary; we are groups each having a different way (religious sect, etc.). And we think that we cannot escape (from the punishment of) Allah in the earth, nor can we escape (from the punishment) by flight. And indeed when we heard the Guidance (this Qur'an), we believed therein (Islamic Monotheism), and whosoever believes in his Lord shall have no fear, either of a decrease in the reward of his good deeds or an increase in punishment for his sins." (Qur'an 72: 1-13)

Here was the Prophet ﷺ, in the world of mankind, not able to enter Makkah; and within Makkah, Muslims were constantly being tortured. But then a new victory was granted to the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims in another world. For imagine the effect the story of the Muslim jinns had on the Prophet's Companions; they felt that they were not alone, but instead that beings from another world were engaged in the same struggle that they were involved with in their world – the struggle between *Tawheed* (Islamic Monotheism) and *Shirk* (polytheism, to associate partners with Allah in worship).

Months after the first meeting took place between the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the jinns, a second delegation of jinns, longing to see the Prophet ﷺ, returned and listened to the speech of their Lord. 'Alqamah (may Allah have mercy on him) related that he once asked Ibn Mas'ood ؓ, "Did anyone among you witness, with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the night of the jinn (i.e., the night during which the jinn first came to listen to the Qur'an being recited by the Prophet ﷺ)?"

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ؓ said, "No, but we were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one night, when we lost him, and then began to search out for him both in valleys and mountain-passes. We said (among ourselves), 'He has been flown away (by jinns), or he has been assassinated.' We spent the worst night that any people have ever spent. In the morning, he came to us from the direction of Hira. We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, we lost you, searched out for you, but could not find you. And we spent the worst night that any people have ever spent.' He ﷺ said, 'A host from the jinns came to me, and I went with him (to his fellow jinns). And I recited for them the Qur'an.' He then took us with him and showed us their traces and the vestiges of their fires. They had asked him for provision (sustenance), and he ﷺ had said to them, 'For you is every bone that falls in your hands and over which Allah's Name has been mentioned; it will be as plentiful as the most plentiful of meat; and every dung from the feed of your animals.' And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said (to us), 'So do not clean yourselves with those two objects (after relieving yourselves), for both of them (bones and the dung of livestock) are the food of your brothers.'"^[1]

The above-mentioned story represented a great victory for Islam in the world of jinns, a victory that was a harbinger for good things to come in the world of human beings. For after a short while passed, the Prophet ﷺ met with delegates from Al-Madeenah who expressed readiness to make their city a stronghold of Islam.

Commenting on the meeting that took place between the Prophet ﷺ and some jinns, Dr. Al-Bootee wrote, "What concerns us from all of this is that every Muslim must believe in the existence of jinns - that they are living beings whom Allah ﷻ ordered to worship Him, just as He ﷻ ordered us to do the same. We must believe in them, even though we cannot see them; Allah ﷻ made them in such a way that makes it impossible for us to see them

^[1] Related by Muslim, in the Book of Prayer, chapter, "Reciting out Loud in the Morning, and Reciting (the Qur'an) to jinns"; *Hadeeth* number: 450.

with the ability of sight that He ﷻ has endowed us with. It is a known fact that our eyes can see only certain types of things in the world. The existence of jinns is established in narrations that are related in *Mutaawaatir* form (a *Mutawaatir* narration is one that is related by so many people from so many people in each chain of the narration, that it is impossible for them to all have colluded upon a lie); information about jinns has been related to us in both the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. The existence of jinns, therefore, is a matter that every Muslim must know about; to disbelieve in their existence is, by extension, to disbelieve in news that has come to us in *Mutawaatir* form from Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. An intelligent person should not fall into the mistake that is the commonest sign of the ignorant person, and that is to claim that he believes only in that which is verifiable through the senses. He goes on to boast that he does not believe in the existence of jinns because he has neither seen them nor sensed them. Such an ignorant person will go on to disbelieve in many things for one reason only: he cannot see them. An established rule in knowledge is: 'Just because I don't sense something does not mean that it does not exist.' So if you are looking for something and don't find it, that does necessitate either that thing's existence or non-existence."^[1]

Now that we have discussed matters that relate to the world of jinns and human beings, it behooves us to discuss another world – the world of the heavens and of the angels, to which the Prophet ﷺ made his miraculous night journey, a journey that is one of a kind in the annals of history, and that will remain one of a kind until the Day of Resurrection.

^[1] Refer to *Fiqh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*, pgs. 105, 106.

4

***Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj* (The Prophet's Miraculous Night Journey First To Jerusalem And Then To The Heavens) The Greatest Bestowal Of Honours**

As long as he was alive, Abu Taalib prevented the Quraish from harming the Prophet ﷺ. True, Abu Taalib was merely one man and one man can only do so much, but in a tribal society like that of the Quraish, individual chieftains were highly respected. And given that Abu Taalib was a respected chieftain, the Quraish did not want to lose him or go against him, and so the Prophet ﷺ was relatively safe from their harm. But as soon as Abu Taalib died, his protection went with him, and the Quraish began to persecute the Prophet ﷺ with impunity - even common members of the Quraish joined in their leaders' onslaught against the Prophet ﷺ.

As for the Prophet's wife, Khadeejah ؓ, everything she said and did consoled and comforted the Prophet ﷺ throughout all of his difficulties. When she died only a few months after the death of Abu Taalib, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ lost her comforting presence.

Then when the Quraish became more vile and harsh in their persecution, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to At-Taaif, hoping for help and support from its people, but receiving instead a hostile and harsh welcome from them and their leaders. Not only did they reject the Prophet's message, they also sent a messenger

Messenger ﷺ those Greater Signs, in preparation for the Prophet's migration and for the great struggles that were to come afterwards. During *Israa* and *Mai'raaj*, the Prophet ﷺ saw much from the unseen world, such as angels, the heavens, Paradise, the Hellfire, and so on.

In the Noble Qur'an, the Prophet's night journey to Jerusalem is discussed in *Soorah Al-Israa*, while his consequent ascension to the heavens is discussed in *Soorah An-Najm*. In *Soorah Al-Israa*, Allah ﷻ mentioned the wisdom behind the Prophet's miraculous night journey:

﴿لَنُرِيَهُ مِنْ أَيْنَأَنْتَ إِذْ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ①﴾

"In order that We might show him (Muhammad ﷺ) of Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc.)." (Qur'an 17: 1)

And in *Soorah An-Najm*, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَقَدْ رَأَى مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَى ⑧﴾

"Indeed he (Muhammad ﷺ) did see, of the Greater Signs, of his Lord (Allah)." (Qur'an 53: 18)

Speaking about the lessons and morals we can learn from the Prophet's miraculous night journey, Abul-Hasan An-Nadawee, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "*Al-Israa* (the Prophet's night journey) was not simply a one of a kind incident, during which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw the Greater Signs, and during which the Prophet ﷺ saw with his own eyes the dominions of the heavens and the earth; beyond these things, the Prophet's night journey involved many profound meanings and far-reaching wisdoms. Chapters *Al-Israa* and *An-Najm*, which were revealed with information about *Al-Israa*, announced that Muhammad ﷺ is the Prophet of both *Qiblahs* (Jerusalem and Makkah), that he is the Imam of the east and the west, that he is the inheritor of the Prophets that came before him, and the Imam of the generations that were to come after him. During the Prophet's journey, Makkah and Jerusalem were juxtaposed (showing a strong

relationship and link between the two), as were the Inviolable House (in Makkah) and *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* (in Jerusalem). Also during that journey, the Prophets prayed behind him, a unique occurrence that announced the comprehensive-ness of his message, the lastingness of his leadership (and Prophethood), and the humanity of his teachings, which are right and applicable during all times and in all places.”^[1]

The Story Of *Al-Israa* And *Al-Mai'raaj*

Anas ibn Maalik ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “*Al-Buraaq* was brought to me; it is a white-coloured, tall beast – larger than a donkey and smaller than a mule. It moves its hoof with a single stride to the farthest point that it can see. I rode on it until I reached Jerusalem; once there, I tied it to the very same ring (of *Masjid Al-Aqsaa*’s door) to which the Prophets would tie (their riding animals). I then entered the *Masjid* and prayed in it two units; I then left. Next, Jibreel ؑ came to me with a vessel of alcohol and a vessel of milk. I chose the milk, and Jibreel ؑ said, “You have chosen *Al-Fitrah* (i.e., Islam, uprightness).”^[2]

In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ spoke to Maalik ibn Sa’sa’ah ؓ about his night journey, saying, “While I was in *Al-Hateem* (i.e., *Al-Hijr*, the northern side of the *Ka’bah*) – and perhaps he ؓ said, ‘*Al-Hijr*’ (the person who is in doubt here is *Qataadah*, one of the narrators of this *Hadeeth*) – lying down, one who comes (i.e., *Jibreel* ؑ) came to me and split me lengthwise – He said, ‘And I heard him say: And he split (the speaker here, ‘I,’ refers to *Qataadah*, and the one he is talking about, ‘him,’ refers to *Anas*, two narrators of the *Hadeeth*) – what is between this and this.” The narrator said, “And I said to *Jaarood*, who was beside me, “What does he mean by this.” He said, “From the lower part of his neck until his pubic hair. And I heard him say, ‘From his upper chest until his pubic hair.’”

^[1] Refer to *Al-Asaas Fis-Sunnah* (1/292).

^[2] Related by Muslim, the Book of *Eemaan*, chapter, “The Night Journey of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to the Heavens”; *Hadeeth* number: 162.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "He then removed my heart, after which a basin made of gold and filled with *Eemaan* (faith) was brought to me. My heart was washed and then filled (with *Eemaan* and wisdom). (My chest) was then put (i.e., sown) back together. A white-coloured beast was then brought to me; it was smaller than a mule but bigger than a donkey." Al-Jaarood asked Anas ؓ, "O Abu Hamzah, it is *Al-Buraaq* (that the Prophet ﷺ was referring to)?" Anas ؓ said, "Yes."

The Prophet ﷺ said, "I was made to ride it, and Jibreel set off with me, until he reached the closest heaven. He asked for it (i.e., the door to the lowest heaven) to be opened. It was said, 'Who is this?' He answered, 'Jibreel.' It was said, 'And who is with you.' Jibreel said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he been sent for?' Jibreel said, 'Yes.' It was said, 'Welcome is he! Indeed, a blessed comer has come!' He then opened the door."

The Prophet ﷺ said, "When I reached (inside), in it (i.e., the lowest heaven) was Adam. He (i.e., Jibreel ؑ) said, 'This is your father, Adam, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I extended greetings of peace to him, and he returned the greetings, after which he said, 'Welcome to a virtuous son and a righteous Prophet.' Then Jibreel ascended with me until he reached the second heaven. He asked for it (i.e., for its door) to be opened, and it was said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Jibreel.' 'And who is with you?' it was said. Jibreel said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he indeed been sent for?' Jibreel said, 'Yes.' It was said, 'Welcome to him. Indeed, a blessed comer has arrived.' He (i.e., the doorkeeper) opened (the door to that heaven). When I reached (inside), (I saw) Yahyaa and 'Eesa, and they are the sons of aunts (i.e., the mother of each one of them is the aunt of other; hence their mothers are sisters). Jibreel said, 'These are Yahyah and 'Eesa, so extend greetings of peace to them.' I gave them greetings of peace, and they returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.'"

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Then I was taken above to the third heaven. He asked for it to be opened, and it was said, 'Who is this?' He

said, 'Jibreel.' It was then said, 'And who is with you?' He said, 'Muhammad.' 'Has he indeed been sent for?' it was said. 'Yes,' said Jibreel. It was said, 'Welcome to him. Indeed, a blessed comer has arrived.' He opened (the door to the third heaven), and when I reached inside, Yousuf was there. Jibreel said, 'This is Yousuf, so give him greetings of peace.' I extended to him greetings of peace; first, he responded, and then he said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.' Next, I was taken above until Jibreel reached the fourth heaven. When Jibreel asked for it (i.e., its door) to be opened, it was said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Jibreel.' 'And who is with you?' it was said. Jibreel said, 'Muhammad.' 'And has he indeed been sent for?' it was said. Jibreel said, 'Yes.' It was said, 'Welcome he is indeed! A blessed comer has indeed arrived,' and he (the doorkeeper of the fourth heaven) opened (the door to the fourth heaven). When I reached inside, Idrees was there, and Jibreel said, 'This is Idrees, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I gave him greetings of peace, and he returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.' Then I was taken above until Jibreel reached the fifth heaven. When Jibreel asked for it to be opened, it was said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Jibreel.' It was said, 'And who is with you?' He said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he indeed been sent for?' He said, 'Yes.' It was said, 'Welcome he is indeed! Verily, a blessed comer has arrived.' He (i.e., the doorkeeper of the fifth heaven) then opened (the door to the fifth heaven). When I reached (inside), Haaron was there, and Jibreel said, 'This is Haaron, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I gave him greetings of peace, and he returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.' Then I was taken above until Jibreel reached the sixth heaven. When Jibreel asked for it (i.e., its door) to be opened, it was said, 'Who is this?' he said, 'Jibreel.' It was said, 'And who is with you?' He said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he indeed been sent for?' Jibreel said, 'Yes.' He (i.e., the doorkeeper of the sixth heaven) said, 'Welcome he is indeed! Verily, a blessed comer has arrived.' When I reached (inside), Moosa was there, and Jibreel said, 'This

is Moosa, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I gave him greetings of peace, and he returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.' When I left him, he cried, and it was said to him, 'What makes you cry?' He said, 'I cry because a youth that was sent after me will have more people from his nation enter Paradise than will enter it from my nation.' Next, I was raised to the seventh heaven. When Jibreel asked for it (i.e., the door of the seventh heaven) to be opened, it was said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Jibreel.' It was said, 'And who is with you?' He said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he indeed been sent for?' Jibreel said, 'Yes.' He (i.e., the doorkeeper of the sixth heaven) said, 'Welcome he is indeed! And a blessed comer has indeed come!' When I reached (inside), Ibraaheem was there, and Jibreel said, 'This is your father, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I gave him greetings of peace, and he returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous son and a righteous Prophet.' Then *As-Sidratul-Muntahaa* (lote-tree of the utmost boundary, beyond which none can pass) was brought near to me. Its fruits were like the large jars of Hajar (because the jars of a place called Hajar are large, they are used proverbially to signify anything that is large; Hajar is a town in Bahrain), and its leaves were like the ears of elephants. Jibreel said, 'This is *Sidratul-Muntahaa*.' And there were four rivers, two internal and two external. I said, 'O Jibreel, what are these two?' He said, 'As for the internal ones, they are two rivers in Paradise. And as for the external ones, they are the Nile and the Euphrates.' Then *Al-Bait Al-Ma'moor* (a house of worship for the angels) was brought near to me. Then a vessel of alcohol, a vessel of milk, and a vessel of honey were brought to me. I took the milk, and he (i.e., Jibreel) said, 'It is the *Fitrah* (i.e., the religion of Islam, uprightness) that you and your nation are upon.' Next, made compulsory upon me were fifty prayers for each and every day. I then returned and passed by Moosa, who said, 'What were you commanded with?' I said, 'I was commanded to perform fifty prayers each and every day.' He said, 'Verily, your nation is not able to perform fifty prayers every single day. By Allah, I have indeed had experience with people

who came before you, and I have had the most difficult of experiences with the Children of Israel. So go back to your Lord and ask Him to decrease (the number of prayers) for your nation.’ And so I returned, and He (i.e., Allah ﷻ) reduced it (the number of obligatory prayers) for me by ten. I returned to Moosa, and he said the same thing as he had said before. And so I returned (to my Lord), and He reduced it for me by ten. Next, I returned to Moosa, and he said the same thing again. And so I returned (to my Lord), and He decreased it for me by ten. I returned to Moosa, who repeated the same message. I returned (to my Lord), and I was ordered to perform ten prayers every single day. I went back (to Moosa), who again said the same thing. And so I returned, and this time I was ordered to perform five prayers every single day. When I returned again to Moosa, he said, ‘What were you commanded with?’ I said, ‘I was commanded to perform five prayers every single day.’ He said, ‘Verily, your nation is not able to perform five prayers every single day. I have indeed had experience with people who came before you, and I have had the most difficult of experiences with the Children of Israel. So return to your Lord, and ask Him to reduce (the number of obligatory prayers) for your nation.’”^[1]

The Prophet ﷺ said to Moosa ؑ, “I asked my Lord until I have become shy; rather, I am pleased, and I do submit.’ When I left, a caller called out, ‘I have finalized My legislated obligatory duty (i.e., people will get 50 rewards for praying five times a day), and I have made lighter (the duty of prayer) for My slaves (i.e., they have to perform 5 prayers in actuality, though they receive for them fifty rewards).’”

In *Ash-Shifaa*, Al-Qaadee ‘Iyaadh mentioned that *Al-Israa Wal-Mai’raaj* took place one year before the Prophet’s migration to Al-Madeenah.^[2] When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned from his blessed journey, he ﷺ informed his people about it. In a gathering

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree, in the Book “The Merits of the *Ansaar*,” chapter, “*Al-Mai’raaj*”; *Hadeeth* number: 3887.

^[2] Refer to *Ash-Shifaa Bi-Ta’reef Huqooq Al-Mustafaa* (1/108).

that consisted, among others, of Al-Mut'im ibn 'Adee, 'Amr ibn Hishaam, and Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Verily, last night I prayed *Al-'Eesha* in this *Masjid*; I also prayed in it in the early morning. Between those two times, I went to Jerusalem, and a group of Prophets were raised for me. Included among them were Ibraaheem, Moosa, and 'Eesa. I led them in prayer, and I spoke to them."

In a mocking tone, 'Amr ibn Hishaam said, "Describe them to me." The Prophet ﷺ said, "As for 'Eesa, he is above medium height, but less than tall. He has a broad chest, ruddy complexion (literally, the Prophet ﷺ said, 'his blood is apparent'), and wavy hair. He is hirsute, and is covered by *Suhbah* (whiteness that is mixed with redness); as if he is 'Urwah ibn Mas'ood Ath-Thaqafei (i.e., 'Eesa resembles him). As for Moosa, he is massive, brown, and tall, as if he is from the men of Shanooah. His teeth overlap one another, his lips are contracted, and his gums protrude outwards. As for Ibraaheem, then by Allah, both in appearance and in character, he resembles me more than any other person."^[1]

The people that were gathered said, "O Muhammad, describe Jerusalem for us." The Prophet ﷺ said, "I entered it at night, and I left it on the same night," explaining to them that he didn't see it well enough or long enough to be able to describe it. But then Jibreel ﷺ came to him, with a picture of Jerusalem on his wing. Seeing it clearly before him, the Prophet ﷺ began to say, "One of its doors is like this, in such and such place. Another of its doors is like this, in such and such place." In short, he ﷺ gave a detailed description of Jerusalem, and those among the Quraish who had visited Jerusalem sat there dumbfounded, not being able to correct or contradict anything he ﷺ said.

They then asked the Prophet ﷺ about a caravan of theirs that was heading back towards Makkah from the direction of Jerusalem. If the Prophet ﷺ had come back from Jerusalem, they explained, he surely should have seen their caravan and knew how far it was

^[1] Refer to *At-Taareekh Al-Islaamee* by Al-Humaidee (3/37).

from Al-Madeenah. And sure enough, the Prophet ﷺ had seen and even visited their caravan. The Prophet ﷺ said to them, "I came upon the caravan of the children of (such and such person) at Ar-Rauhaa; one of their she-camels had strayed, and they went out to search for it. And so when I reached their encampment, no one among them (i.e., the people of the caravan) was there. There was a cup of water, and I drank from it. So ask them about that (when they return)." They said, "This, by God, is indeed a sign!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Then I reached the caravan of the sons of (such and such person). The camels bolted away from me, and among them a red camel knelt down; upon it was a saddlebag that had white stripes on it. I do not know whether the camel had a fracture or not, so ask them about that." They said, "This, by God, is indeed a sign!" The Prophet ﷺ continued to say, "Then I reached the caravan of the children of (such and such person) at At-Tan'eem; at the forefront of the caravan was a camel that was white, though it had some (spots or patches of) blackness in it. And here it is coming to you from Ath-Thaniyyah (a mountain road)."

Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah said, "A Magician." They went and looked, finding that everything about the caravans was in exact agreement with the Prophet's description. And the people of the caravans confirmed everything that the Prophet ﷺ had said: That, yes, water was missing; that, yes, camels had strayed; and so on. The people of the Quraish had earlier said, "This, by God, is indeed a sign," indicating that they would believe in him if what he said was true. But once they knew with certainty that what he said was true, they accused him of soothsaying. They said, "Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah was truthful concerning what he said."^[1]

The Prophet's miraculous night journey ended up being a difficult test for certain people who had believed in the Prophet's *Da'wah*, a test that some of them failed, for they ended up apostatizing. And

^[1] *Al-Mataalib Al-'Aaliyah* by Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (4/201-204); *Uyoon Al-Athar* (1/140-142); and Ibn Hishaam, who was relating from Umm Hanai ؓ (2/11).

some people went to Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ and said, "Will you not go to your companion (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ)? He claims that he made a journey during the night to Jerusalem!" Abu Bakr ؓ said, "And did he say that?" They said, "Yes." Abu Bakr ؓ said, "If he said that, then he ؓ has spoken the truth." Amazed by his words, they said, "Do you really believe him when he says that he went during the night to Jerusalem and came back before the morning?" Abu Bakr ؓ said, "Yes, I indeed believe him concerning that which is more amazing than that. I believe him about news from the heavens, which comes in the morning or at the end of the day." Because of the stance that Abu Bakr ؓ took during the trial and test that followed the Prophet's miraculous night journey, he was named "As-Siddeeq (the 'Truthful One')." ^[1]

Morals and Lessons

- 1) Every trial or tribulation is followed by some form of relief or reward. The three years that followed the seventh year of the Messenger of Allah's Prophethood were replete with trials and hardships for the Prophet ﷺ. First, he ؓ, his followers, and even his fellow clansmen were besieged in a mountain pass that belonged to Abu Taalib. Second, the Prophet ﷺ lost in the span of a few months his uncle, Abu Taalib, his greatest protector from humankind, and his wife, Khadeejah ؓ, his human source of comfort. Third, the Quraish took advantage of Abu Taalib's death, taking it as a sign that they could persecute and harm the Prophet ﷺ more severely than ever before. And fourth, the people of At-Taaif, to whom the Prophet ﷺ went seeking their support and help, rejected the Prophet's message and treated him in a vile and despicable manner. Yet, despite all of these hardships, the Prophet ﷺ continued on course, patiently inviting people to Islam, not minding the hardships he had to continually face. It was then

^[1] Related in *Al-Mustadrak* (3/62). Al-Haakim said, "This *Hadeeth* has an authentic chain." And Adh-Dhahabee concurred with Al-Haakim's grading of the *Hadeeth*.

that the time was ripe for a great reward and consolation, one that took the form of a blessed and miraculous night journey first to Jerusalem and then upwards to the unseen world of the heavens. For the Prophet's patience and efforts, Allah ﷻ rewarded and honoured him with a journey during which the Prophet ﷺ spoke directly to Allah ﷻ, without any intermediary or messenger. Perhaps the Angels best expressed the honour that was being bestowed on him when the angel doorkeepers of each heaven exclaimed, "And has he indeed been sent for?" Angels knew that human beings were not admitted into the heavens and that the Prophet's arrival and entry was a one of a kind occurrence. And so the gatekeepers were expressing astonishment and amazement at Allah's great bestowal of honour upon the Prophet ﷺ.

- 2) The Prophet's miraculous night journey was a precursor of a new stage in the Prophet's *Da'wah*, for it occurred shortly before the Prophet's migration to Al-Madeenah. That new stage in the Prophet's *Da'wah* involved the establishment of a Muslim country.

Now, to be sure, Allah ﷻ wanted the foundations of that country to be strong and firm; and the Prophet's night journey helped achieve that end. For Allah ﷻ made the night journey a test for the Muslims, to purge from their ranks those who had doubts and those whose hearts were diseased, and to make firm the believers who were sincere and strong in their faith.

- 3) As Muslims, we should be sure of our faith, so sure that we are willing to speak the truth even when we are afraid that others will make fun of us. Consider the faith and bravery of the Prophet ﷺ, who openly described an event to the disbelievers that their perverse and limited minds could not even imagine, never mind accept. Even with the certainty of rejection and mockery from his people, the Prophet ﷺ spoke

without hesitation or fear, setting an ideal example for his nation, in terms of openly speaking the truth in front of the people of falsehood.

- 4) Not only did Allah ﷻ bestow honour upon the Prophet ﷺ with a miraculous night journey, but also He ﷻ provided him with clear proofs when he returned to Makkah, proofs that were sufficiently impressive to make Quraish's leaders believe. But they were arrogant, and they disbelieved. Among those proofs are the following:
 - ◆ The Prophet ﷺ gave a vivid and detailed description of Jerusalem though he never visited it before. Some members of the Quraish had visited Jerusalem and had seen *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa*. Through Jibreel ﷺ, Allah ﷻ enabled the Prophet ﷺ to see a picture or hologram of sorts of *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa*, so that he could be able to describe it to the polytheists. Those among them that had visited the area of Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions) admitted that the Prophet ﷺ had given an exact description of Jerusalem.
 - ◆ The Prophet ﷺ informed them about one of their caravans that was heading back to Makkah and that had reached Ar-Rawhaa; he ﷺ told them about the camel that had strayed and about the water he drank from the cup or canteen. When the people of that particular caravan returned, they confirmed everything that the Prophet ﷺ had said about them.
 - ◆ The Prophet ﷺ then informed them about a second caravan that he had come across, about how its camels had bolted away, and about the description of one of its camels in particular. When the members of that caravan returned, they too confirmed everything that the Prophet ﷺ said about them.
 - ◆ And finally, the Prophet ﷺ told them about a third caravan that he passed by at Al-Abwaa and about the camel that was at its forefront. He ﷺ also told them that, as he was describing it to them, the caravan was approaching Makkah from the mountain pass of At-Tan'eem. Though they had to wait to

confirm the Prophet's story regarding the previous two caravans, Quraish's leaders were able to confirm his information regarding this last caravan immediately. And so they went to the outskirts of Makkah and saw for themselves that what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had told them was true.

All of the above-mentioned proofs were irrefutable; in no way could the polytheists accuse him of lying, so they resorted to the only accusation that came to their minds, saying that he ﷺ was a soothsayer. It was not that they really believed in what they were saying; it was merely that they were too arrogant to admit the truth.

- 5) After the Prophet ﷺ, the person who shined most after *Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj* was Abu Bakr ؓ. When the polytheists told him that the Prophet ﷺ had just informed them about his night journey – and Abu Bakr ؓ had not yet heard about it – he ؓ did not in the least hesitate or waver in his faith, but instead immediately said, "If he said that, then he ﷺ has spoken the truth. I indeed believe him concerning that which is more amazing than that. I believe him about news from the heavens, which comes in the morning or at the end of the day." This statement sheds light not only on Abu Bakr's strong faith, but also on his understanding and wisdom, for he intelligently compared the night journey with the coming down of revelation from the sky – in that he believed in both the latter and the former. For if Allah ﷻ, Who is over all things able, sends revelation down to the Prophet ﷺ in an instant, He ﷻ can of course enable the Prophet ﷺ to journey to the heavens and back in a single night. Yes, Abu Bakr ؓ understood that such a journey is strange or highly implausible for a common man, but not so for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Based on Abu Bakr's response, he ؓ truly deserves the title, *As-Siddeeq*.
- 6) In regard to all miracles, matters from the unseen world, or anything else, as long as we have an authentic report from the Prophet ﷺ, we must believe in what he ﷺ said without

thinking up false interpretations. Therefore, when we read about how the Prophet's chest was split open and how his heart was washed, we must believe in the literal occurrence of both, for Allah is All-Powerful and is over all things able. We show weakness in faith when, in the absence of proof, we try to interpret matters of the unseen world that come to us through authentic knowledge from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Therefore, since there is no proof to the contrary, we believe with certainty that the Prophet ﷺ made the night journey both in spirit and in body. We outright reject the claim of those who say that it was a journey of the soul; or in other words, a dream. Had the night journey been a dream, it would not have been a miracle, and Quraish's leaders would not have disbelieved in it, for there is nothing extraordinary about such a dream. Furthermore, Allah ﷻ established the reality of the Prophet's journey in clear and unambiguous language:

﴿سُبْحَنَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ﴾

"Glorified (and Exalted) be He (Allah) [above all that (evil) they associate with Him] Who took his slave (Muhammad ﷺ) for a journey." (Qur'an 17: 1)

"Slave" in this verse refers comprehensively to the Prophet's body and soul.

- 7) That the Prophet ﷺ led the Prophets ﷺ in prayer proves that they submit to and agree upon his leadership; also, that they submit to the fact that the laws of Islam abrogate the laws that were sent down with all previous Prophets. In this there is a clear message for non-Muslims from the People of the Book: That they should accept what their Prophets have accepted, by following the Seal of Prophets, the Prophet ﷺ who was sent to all of mankind, and whose *Shariah* is binding and applicable until the Day of Resurrection.
- 8) In the Prophet's miraculous night journey, a clear and strong

link is established between *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* in Jerusalem and *Al-Masjid Al-Haraam* in Makkah. That link has far-reaching implications for Muslims, such as the following:

- ◆ Jerusalem is of great importance to Muslims. It is one of the three inviolable *Masjids*; it is the place to which the Prophet ﷺ was taken on his night journey; and it was the *Qiblah* of the Muslims throughout the Makkan era of the Prophet's biography. All Muslims should therefore love *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa*, which is both blessed and sanctified.
- ◆ The link that is established in the Prophet's journey and elsewhere instills a sense of responsibility in Muslims towards *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* – the responsibility to keep it pure from all forms of polytheism and safe from falling into the hands of the enemies of Islam.
- ◆ The link also instills into Muslims the sense that a threat to *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* is a threat to *Al-Masjid Al-Haraam*, and an attack on *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* is the precursor to an attack on *Al-Masjid Al-Haraam*. This principle is not an imagined one, but rather is established through historical fact. During the crusades, Arnaat, ruler of the Al-Kurk kingdom, sent some of his people on a mission to desecrate the grave of the Prophet ﷺ and to remove his corpse from the Prophet's *Masjid*. More recently, the Portuguese tried to accomplish what the crusaders before them failed to accomplish: To enter with their army into Makkah and Al-Madeenah. But the strong resistance of the Mamaaleek and 'Uthmaaniyoon prevented them from reaching their infernal goal.

After the War of 1967, during which the Jews took control of Jerusalem, Israeli leaders expressed their desire to eventually take control of the Arabian Peninsula – first and foremost the city of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Khaibar.

After the Israeli army entered Jerusalem, David Ben Gurion gave a fiery speech, in which he said, "We have taken control over Jerusalem, and we are on our way to Yathrib (i.e., Al-

Madeenah).^[1] Golda Mayer, another Israeli leader, said after the beginning of the occupation of Jerusalem, "I indeed smell the odour of my grandparents in Al-Madeenah and Al-Hijaz (Makkah, Madeenah, Taaif, etc.); and those are our lands that we will indeed take back."^[2] Israeli leaders then drew up a map of their anticipated country, which extends, they believe, from the Euphrates until the Nile. That area includes the Arabian Peninsula, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Yemen, Kuwait, and all of the Gulf countries. After their victory in 1967, they distributed the map of that anticipated country throughout parts of Europe.^[3]

- 9) It is interesting to note that Allah ﷻ mentions in *Soorah Al-Israa* the actual story of *Al-Israa* in only a single Verse. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿سُبْحَنَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ ۚ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِّنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ۝١﴾

'Glorified (and Exalted) be He (Allah) [above all that (evil) they associate with Him] Who took his slave (Muhammad ﷺ) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid-Al-Haram (at Makkah) to the farthest mosque (in Jerusalem), the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, in order that We might show him (Muhammad ﷺ) of Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc.). Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.'" (Qur'an 17: 1)

The next Verses in the chapter shift from the topic of the Prophet's night journey to a discussion about the Children of Israel – in particular, the Jews. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ أَلَّا تَتَّخِذُوا مِن دُونِي وَكِيلًا ۝٢ ذُرِّيَّتَهُ مَن حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا ۝٣ وَقَضَيْنَا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ فِي الْكِتَابِ لَتُفْسِدُنَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَلَنَعْلَنَ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا ۝٤﴾

[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Faaris (pg. 314).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Faaris (pg. 215).

فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ أُولَاهُمَا بَعَثْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ عِبَادًا لَنَا أُولَىٰ بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ فَجَاسُوا خِلَالَ الدِّيَارِ
وَكَاثَ وَعْدًا مَّفْعُولًا ۝ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ الْكَرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَمْدَدْنَاكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ
وَبَنِينَ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيرًا ۝ إِن أَحْسَنْتُمْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ
فَلَهَا ۖ فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ الْآخِرَةِ لِيَسْتَوُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَلِيُتَبَرَّكُوا مَا عَلَوْا تَتَبَرًّا ۖ ﴿٧﴾

“And We gave Moosa (Moses) the Scripture and made it a guidance for the Children of Israel (saying): “Take not other Me as (your) Wakil (Protector, Lord, or Disposer of your affairs, etc.). O offspring of those whom We carried (in the ship) with Nooh (Noah)! Verily, he was a grateful slave.” And We decreed for the Children of Israel in the Scripture, that indeed you would do mischief on the earth twice and you will become tyrants and extremely arrogant! So, when the promise came for the first of the two, We sent against you slaves of Ours given to terrible warfare. They entered the very innermost parts of your homes. And it was a promise (completely) fulfilled. Then We gave you once again, a return of victory over them. And We helped you with wealth and children and made you more numerous in man-power. (And We said): “If you do good, you do good for your own selves, and if you do evil (you do it) against yourselves.” Then, when the second promise came to pass, (We permitted your enemies) to make your faces sorrowful and to enter the mosque (of Jerusalem) as they had entered it before, and to destroy with utter destruction all that fell in their hands.” (Qur’an 17: 2-7)

In *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah*, Ibn Katheer said, “By order of the king of Persia^[1], Bakhtansar began a campaign to destroy the Jewish kingdom. He and his army “entered the very innermost parts of (Jewish) homes,” forcing the Children of Israel to flee in all directions. Some of them settled in Al-Hijaaz (the area that

^[1] Dr. Farsat Mar’ee, Professor of History in the University of Sanai, is of the view that Bakhtansar was Kaldaanee and not Persian, and that the order he received was from the king of Kaldaan.

consists, among other places, of Makkah, At-Taaif, and Al-Madeenah); some of them settled in Yathrib (i.e., Al-Madeenah); some of them settled in Waadee Al-Qura; and Shurdhumah went to Egypt. The Persian assault on and destruction of the Jewish kingdom took place in the sixth century prior to the beginning of the Christian calendar – in the year 597.

As for the second destruction that is referred to in the above-mentioned Verses, it took place in the year 70 of the Christian calendar. After the previous destruction, the Jews managed to rebuild their kingdom. But then it was the Romans, and not the Persians, that attacked the Jews. This occurred when the Roman general Titus destroyed the Aurshaleem Temple. Subjected to political and religious persecution from the Romans, the Jews were forced to flee in different directions. Some of them traced the migration route of their first grandparents, by making their way to the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula.^[1]

The Jews, therefore, had a strong presence in the Arabian Peninsula by the time the Prophet ﷺ was sent to mankind. Just as the Prophet ﷺ was well-prepared to deal with the Quraish, he ﷺ was similarly prepared to deal with the Jews. For the Jews were not simply a historically important nation, like the people of 'Ad and Thamood, whose stories were related for guidance and reflection, and whose significance was limited to the past; rather, they were a nation whose presence was still, during the Prophet's lifetime, strong and palpable within Arabia itself. Beyond being of economic significance in the Peninsula, the Jews had status on an intellectual level as well – for among them were scholars, who had with them information about past generations and books that were passed down from Prophets ﷺ.

Soorah Al-Israa dealt with one aspect of the wars that took place between the Romans, the Persians, and the Jews; soon afterwards, *Soorah Ar-Room* was revealed, and it too discussed the same struggles that were taking place on the international stage. Allah ﷻ said:

^[1] *Ibn Khuldoon* (2/206).

﴿الْم ١ غُلِبَتِ الرُّومُ ٢﴾ فِي أَذَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ غَلِبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ
 ٣ فِي يَضِيعُ سِنِيرُهُ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ بَعْدُ وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
 ٤ يَنْصُرِ اللَّهُ يَنْصُرُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ٥ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ لَا
 يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٦ يَعْلَمُونَ ظَهْرًا مِنَ الْحَيَاةِ
 الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

“Alif-Lam-Mim. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings]. The Romans have been defeated. In the nearer land (Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine), and they, after their defeat, will be victorious. Within three to nine years. The decision of the matter, before and after (these events) is only with Allah, (before the defeat of Romans by the Persians, and after, i.e., the defeat of the Persians by the Romans). And on that Day, the believers (i.e., Muslims) will rejoice (at the victory given by Allah to the Romans against the Persians). With the help of Allah, He helps whom He wills, and He is the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful. (It is) a Promise of Allah (i.e., Allah will give victory to the Romans against the Persians), and Allah fails not in His Promise, but most of men know not. They know only the outside appearance of the life of the world (i.e., the matters of their livelihood, like irrigating or sowing or reaping, etc.), and they are heedless of the Hereafter.” (Qur’an 30: 1-7)

The polytheists of the Quraish wanted the Persians to defeat the Romans, since they had in common with the Persians the worship of idols. Meanwhile, the Muslims wanted the Romans to come out victorious because they were People of the Book, because they were closer to Islam than were the polytheists of Persia. Furthermore, in the Qur’an, it was stated in clear and unambiguous terms that the Romans would defeat the Persians.

Ibn ‘Attiyyah, however, has another view on the matter, one that should not be discounted outright, but should rather be contemplated. He asserted that the main reason why the Muslims rejoiced on hearing of the Romans’ victory wasn’t that

the Romans were People of the Book, or that their victory would prove the truthfulness of the Qur'an, but rather that, from a strategic point of view, a victory for the Romans was in the best interests of the Muslims. Ibn 'Atiyyah wrote, "What is closer to the truth in the matter is that the Muslims wanted the weaker enemy to win, for if the greater and stronger enemy were to win, they would become a more formidable foe (for the Muslims in the future). Reflect on this point, while you keep in mind that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted his religion to reign supreme over (the religions of) all other nations."^[1]

What Ibn 'Attiyyah was alluding to was that, if the Romans, the lesser power, came out as victors, the Muslims would benefit in two ways. First, the Persian Empire would obviously become weaker. And second, even though the Romans would come out as victors, they would have used up a lot of their resources in doing battle with the Persians, and so they too would become weaker. And that would pave the way for the Muslims to defeat them in the near future – and that actually occurred not many years later with the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the eastern wing of the Roman Empire. In short, when the Romans came out as victors over the Persians, the way was opened for the Muslims to become a new global power, while the existing two global powers were suffering from a sharp decline.^[2]

- 10) The very special night of *Al-Israa* and *Mai'raaj* was chosen as the night during which the five daily prayers were made obligatory; this, as Ibn Katheer mentioned, "Points to the care that was taken to show the honour and greatness of prayer."^[3] When we contemplate the importance of prayer, we should remember, among other things, that it was legislated on the blessed night of *Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj*, and that, before the Prophet ﷺ died, it was one of the last things that he ﷺ advised us about.

^[1] *Tafseer Ibn 'Atiyyah* (11/425).

^[2] Refer to *Usool Al-Fikr As-Siyaasee* (pg. 158).

^[3] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (3/23).

- 11) When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about whether he saw his Lord during *Al-Mai'raaj*, he ﷺ said, "Light, so how could I see Him (i.e., His veil is light, so how could I see Him?)?"^[1]
- 12) During *Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw a great deal of the unseen world – such as matters concerning the past, angels, the heavens, and even the future. The Prophet ﷺ saw, among other things, the evil consequences of many societal ills. Some societal ills and their consequences which he witnessed that night are as follows:
 - ◆ The Prophet ﷺ saw punishment being meted out to backbiters. When, during that night, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw people eating corpses, Jibreel informed him about them, saying, "These are the ones that eat the flesh of people (i.e., backbiters)."^[2]
 - ◆ He ﷺ witnessed people being punished for wrongly eating the wealth of orphans. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw men with lips that were big like the lips of camels; in their hands were pieces of fire that were like stones. They would cast them into their mouths, and the pieces would then come out of their buttocks. Jibreel ﷺ informed the Prophet ﷺ about them, saying, "These are the ones who wrongfully eat the wealth of orphans."^[3]
 - ◆ Regarding the punishment for those who eat from the proceeds of usury, the Prophet ﷺ passed by, during his night journey, a group of people whose stomachs were like houses, and inside of them were snakes. From the outside, their insides could be seen. Jibreel ﷺ said to the Prophet ﷺ, "These are the eaters of usury."^[4]

^[1] Related in *Muslim*, the Book of *Eemaan*, chapter, "Concerning His Saying, 'Light, so How Could I see Him'"; *Hadeeth* number: 178.

^[2] *Al-Fath Ar-Rabbaanee*, by As-Saa'aatee (20/255). As-Saa'aatee said, "Al-Haafiz Ibn Katheer declared that its chain is authentic."

^[3] *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, chapter, "The Story of *Al-Mai'raaj*."

^[4] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (4/274).

- ◆ Other narrations^[1] mention the punishment of fornicators, of people who refuse to pay *Zakaat*, of speakers who cause *Fitnah*, and of people who are negligent and carefree when it comes to being trustworthy.^[2]
- ◆ The Prophet ﷺ also saw people being rewarded for good deeds. For example, during *Al-Mai'raaj*, he ﷺ passed by a group of people who planted on the same day as they harvested; and as soon as they finished harvesting, things returned to being as they previously were. Jibreel ﷺ said, 'These are *Al-Mujaahidoon* (those who fight and struggle) in the way of Allah. Their good deeds are multiplied 700 times. And whatever they spend (for the cause of Allah) is replaced (for them).'^[3]
- ◆ The Companions رضي الله عنهم understood the importance of *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* and their duties towards it. For a while, it was in the control of the Romans; then the Muslims conquered it during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab رضي الله عنه. Jerusalem then remained a place of peace and safety until five centuries later when the crusaders conquered it and wreaked havoc on it and its inhabitants. They continued to do so until about a century later, when the Muslims freed it under the military leadership of Salaahud-Deen Al-Ayyoobee (may Allah have mercy on him). Now again, Jerusalem has been violently and brutally taken away from Muslims; who now will free it? Indeed, we belong to Allah, and to Him is our return.

[1] All of the narrations that are related in regard to the punishments the Prophet ﷺ witnessed during *Mai'raaj*, are from a *Hadeeth* that is related from Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree رضي الله عنه. Narrations of the *Hadeeth* are found in the books of *Tafseer* and in *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*; however, the *Hadeeth* is not related authentically from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and it is related in neither *Saheeh Bukhaaree* nor *Saheeh Muslim*. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

[2] *Tafseer At-Tabaree* (15/7), and *Al-Fath Ar-Rabbaanee* (20/257).

[3] Refer to *Al-Khasaa'is Al-Kubraa* (1/171), and *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Faaris (pg. 220).



**The Prophet ﷺ Seeks Support
From Other Tribes, And The
Companions ﷺ Later Begin
Migrating To Al-Madeenah**



1

The Prophet ﷺ Seeks Support From Other Tribes

After the Prophet ﷺ returned from At-Taaif, he ﷺ began to present himself to various tribes during the *Hajj* season. He ﷺ would go to each tribe, explain Islam to its members, and ask them to protect and help him ﷺ, so that he could freely and safely convey the message of Islam. And the Prophet ﷺ would do the same during trading seasons, when different tribes would congregate in specific marketplaces.

Accompanying the Prophet ﷺ during his visits to various tribes was Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ, who was especially useful, since he ؓ was perhaps the most knowledgeable man alive regarding the genealogy and history of Arab peoples; with that knowledge, he ؓ knew the strong and weak points of each tribe.

Their mission was not simply to invite people to Islam, but also to gain the protection of militarily formidable tribes. And so they sought out the leaders of the strongest tribes in Arabia. Since they were asking for help and protection, they needed to know something about each tribe and its military capabilities, so before asking for help, Abu Bakr ؓ would ask them a number of questions: How many people are in your tribe? What are your defensive capabilities? How skilled are you at fighting?

Al-Miqreezee said, "Then the Prophet ﷺ would present himself to the tribes (of Arabia) during the days of the (*Hajj*) season and invite them to Islam. Those tribes were as follows: Banu 'Aamir,

Ghassaan, Banu Fazaarah, Banu Murrah, Banu Haneefah, Banu Saleem, Banu 'Abs, Banu Nasr, Tha'labah ibn 'Iqaabah, Kandah, Kalb, Banu Al-Haarith ibn Ka'ab, Banu 'Uthrah, Qais ibn Al-Khateem, and Abu Al-Yusr Anas ibn ibn Abee Raafai'. Al-Waaqidee discussed in great detail information about each of these tribes. It is said that the Prophet ﷺ began with Kindah, inviting them to Islam. Then he ﷺ went to Kalb; then to Banu Haneefah; then to Banu 'Aamir. He ﷺ would say (to them), 'Who is the man who will carry me to his people and protect me, so that I can convey the message of my Lord? For indeed, the (people of the) Quraish have prevented me from conveying the message of my Lord.' Meanwhile, Abu Lahab would follow him around and say to the leaders of tribes, 'Do not listen to him, for indeed, he is a liar.'"[1]

In inviting tribes to Islam, the Prophet ﷺ was subjected to rejection as well as both mental and physical abuse. When tribal leaders would reject the Prophet's message, they didn't do so in a polite manner or with an apologetic tone; rather, they would say, for example, "His people know him best. How can the same person who corrupts his people be good for us?" And they would then force him to leave. The rumours that the Quraish were spreading of course did not help matters; in fact, the rumours they spread gained currency among various tribal chieftains.

Mudrik ibn Muneeb related from his father, who related from his father ʿAbd al-Rahman, that, "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ during the period of ignorance (i.e., while I was still a non-Muslim), and he would say, 'O people, say: None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and you will be successful.' Some among them spit in his face; others among them poured dirt over him; and yet others among them cursed him. Then, in the middle of the day, a young girl came with a very large cup of water and washed his face and hands. He ﷺ said, 'O my daughter, do not fear defeat or humiliation for your father.' I asked, 'Who is she?' They (the

[1] *Imtaa' Al-Asmaa'* by Al-Miqreezee (1/30, 31).

people that were present with him) said, 'Zainab, daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ,' And she was a beautiful young girl."^[1]

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would invite people of other tribes during heavy trading seasons or during the *Hajj* season, Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab – may Allah curse them both – would take turns following the Prophet ﷺ around and trying to discredit him in the eyes of his audience. And so the Prophet ﷺ had to suffer ill-treatment both at their hands and at the hands of the people he was inviting to Islam.

Counteracting The Effects Of Abu Jahl And Abu Lahab's Smear Campaign

It was hard enough to convince leaders of Arab tribes to embrace the truth; what made matters even worse was that Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab would follow the Prophet ﷺ when he visited different tribes, and they would speak lies about him to tribal leaders. To counteract their efforts to discredit him, the Prophet ﷺ employed the following strategies:

1) He ﷺ would set nocturnal appointments with tribal chieftains

So that no one from the Quraish could follow him and prevent him from conveying the message of Islam, the Prophet ﷺ would visit leaders of other tribes during the dark hours of the night. We know that, in the end, this strategy worked, for it is related that the Messenger ﷺ met with the Aus and Khazraj tribes (the two tribes of Al-Madeenah) at night; and then later, he ﷺ met them again at night for the first and second pledges of Al-'Aqabah.

2) He ﷺ would visit tribal leaders in their homes

The Prophet ﷺ went directly to the abodes of the Kalb, Banu Haneefah, and Banu 'Aamir tribes. He ﷺ did so in such a manner

^[1] Refer to *Al-Maihnah Fil-'Ahd Al-Makki* (pg. 53).

as to prevent the Quraish from following him or interfering with his *Da'wah* efforts.

3) He ﷺ took helpers along with him

Abu Bakr ؓ and 'Alee ؓ accompanied the Prophet ﷺ during some of his visits to other tribes. The Prophet ﷺ took them with him perhaps because he ﷺ did not want tribal leaders to think that he was alone and had no helpers or followers from Quraish's nobility. On the other hand, Abu Bakr ؓ was particularly helpful in that he was very knowledgeable regarding the lineage and history of Arab peoples. His knowledge helped the Prophet ﷺ learn more about the tribes he was visiting, which in turn would help him choose the best tribe to bear the duties of spreading Islam to the rest of Arabia and beyond.

4) He ﷺ first ascertained the military capabilities of each tribe

Practically, it would be of little help if a tribe of 15 men agreed to take in the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ؓ, for such a tribe could be of no match to Quraish's military capabilities. And so, before even asking for a particular tribe's help, the Prophet ﷺ would ask its leaders about their defensive capabilities and military strength. In other stages of his *Da'wah*, the Prophet ﷺ was primarily concerned with inviting people to Islam; in this particular stage, he ﷺ also wanted to find a tribe that could provide safety, support, and protection to himself ﷺ and his Companions ؓ.

Negotiations With Banu 'Aamir

We know that the Prophet ﷺ did his research before asking a tribe for help and support; in this regard, the tribe of Banu 'Aamir is a good example. Both the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ, through researching the matter, came to know that Banu 'Aamir was a militarily strong tribe that consisted of many members. In fact, it was one of only five Arab tribes that, during war, never had any of its women captured and taken as slaves. Furthermore, Banu

‘Aamir was never under the rule of a foreign king and never had to pay tribute to a foreign power. Therefore, it was comparable in strength to the Quraish and the Khuzaa’ah.

Also, the Prophet ﷺ knew that there was a longstanding feud between the Banu ‘Aamir tribe and the Thaqeef tribe of At-Taaif. If the people of Thaqeef refused to embrace Islam, they would have a lot to think about if their bitter enemies, the members of a very strong tribe, embraced Islam.

Authors of *Seerah* books related that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to the tribe of Banu ‘Aamir and invited its people to Islam, a man among them named Baiharah ibn Firaas said, “By Allah, if I were to take with me this young man from the Quraish, I would use him to eat up the Arabs (i.e., I would use him to fight against and become victorious over the Arabs).” He then said to the Prophet ﷺ, “Suppose that we follow you upon your affair (i.e., upon Islam), and suppose that Allah ﷻ then makes you victorious over those who oppose you, will the matter (of leadership and rule) return to us after you (die)?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “The matter rests with Allah; He places it (leadership, rule) wherever He pleases.” Baiharah said, “Will you make our throats targets for Arabs, for the cause of us protecting you, and then when Allah makes you victorious, the matter (of leadership and rule) will be given to those other than us? We have no need of your affair (i.e., of Islam, of following you, of protecting you, etc.).” And thus did they refuse to help and support him.^[1]

Negotiations With The Tribe Of Banu Shaibaan

According to one narration, ‘Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ said, “When Allah ﷻ ordered His Prophet ﷺ to present himself to Arab tribes, he left (to go and visit one of them), and I went with him. Then we went to another gathering, over which there was an aura of calmness and gravity. Abu Bakr ؓ came and extended greetings of peace, after which he ؓ said, ‘Who are these people?’ They (i.e.,

^[1] Refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (2/38).

those whom he asked) said, '(The tribe of) Shaibaan ibn Tha'labah.' Abu Bakr ؓ turned to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, 'May my mother and father be sacrificed for you; these are the noblest of people, and among them is Mafrooq, who is best among them in speech and in looks.' Mafrooq had two braids that fell down to (his upper chest). Of all his people, Mafrooq was seated closest to Abu Bakr ؓ. Abu Bakr ؓ said, 'How many are you?' Mafrooq said, 'We are more than one thousand in number, and (an army of) one thousand is not defeated because it is lacking in numbers.' Abu Bakr ؓ said, 'And how strong are you (in battle).' Mafrooq said, 'We are never as angry as we are when we meet (our enemy for battle), and we never fight as fiercely as we do when we are angry. We prefer good horses to children, and weapons to pollen. As for victory, it comes from Allah: He ﷻ grants it to us one time, and He ﷻ grants it against us (i.e., to our opponents) the next time. Perhaps you are the brother of Quraish?' Abu Bakr ؓ said, 'If it has reached you that he is indeed the Messenger of Allah, then here he is.' Mafrooq said, 'O brother of Quraish, to what do you invite us?' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'I invite you to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, Who has no partner, and that I am indeed the slave of Allah and His Messenger. I also invite you to grant me shelter and to support me. For indeed, the Quraish has indeed united against (the religion of) Allah, and has disbelieved in Allah's Messenger ﷺ. Having renounced the truth, they have taken to falsehood alone. And Allah is the All-Rich, *Al-Hameed* (the One Who is deserving of all praise).' Mafrooq said, 'O brother of the Quraish, to what else do you invite? For by Allah, I have not heard speech that is better than this.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then recited this Verse:

﴿قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَنِ اتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي عَلَيْكُمْ عَلَىٰ تَشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا
وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِمَّنْ إِمْلَقُوا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ
وَأَيَّاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنٌ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا
النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَلَّيْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): 'Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited you from: Join not anything in worship with Him; be good and dutiful to your parents; kill not your children because of poverty – We provide sustenance for you and for them; come not near to Al-Fawahish (shameful sins, illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) whether committed openly or secretly, and kill not anyone whom Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islamic law). This He has commanded you that you may understand.'" (Qur'an 6: 151)

Mafooq said, 'By Allah, you have invited to the noblest of manners and the best of deeds. Those people that have disbelieved in you and have united against you have lied and are false.' Mafooq then returned the matter (i.e., the decision thereof) to Haani ibn Qabeesah, saying, 'And this is Haani, our *Shaikh* (leader), and the one among us who is responsible for our religion.' Haani then said, 'I have heard your speech, O brother of Quraish. Yet I indeed feel that us leaving our religion and following your religion after a single meeting you have had with us, is to take a shameful view of things, and shows shortsightedness concerning the outcome (of that decision). Indeed, stumbling (and erring) is the concomitant of hastiness. And we do indeed dislike forcing an agreement on those (among us) we have left behind. So instead, we will return (to our people), and you will return (to yours), and we will study the matter.' As if he wanted the participation of Al-Muthannah ibn Haarithah, Haani said, 'And this is Al-Muthannah, our *Shaikh*, and the one who is in charge of us during war.' Al-Muthannah – who later embraced Islam – said, 'I have indeed heard your speech, O brother of Quraish. My answer concerning what you said – concerning us leaving our religion and following yours – is the same answer that Haani gave. We chose as residence territory that lies between two As-Sariyyaan; one of them is Al-Yamaamah, and the other is As-Simaamah.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him, 'What are these two As-Sariyyaan?' Al-Muthannah said, 'The rivers of Kisra (Kisra was the emperor of Persia) and the waters of

the Arabs. As for our territory that lies beside the rivers of Kisra, then anyone who makes a mistake there (i.e., a mistake against the emperor) is not forgiven, and his excuses are not accepted. The only reason why we are allowed to reside there is that Kisra has taken a covenant upon us: We may not do anything new (that displeases him), and we may not give refuge to someone (whom he deems to be) subversive. And, O brother of Quraish, I feel that this matter which you are inviting us to is one that kings detest. If you want us to give you shelter and support you in the territory that lies along the waters of the Arabs, then we will do so.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'You have not answered in an ill manner, for you have spoken with truthful eloquence. Verily, the religion of Allah ﷻ will be supported only by those who guard it from all directions. Now, suppose that only a short period of time passes before Allah ﷻ makes you inherit their (i.e., the people of Persia) lands and homes, and makes you take to bed their women – will you then glorify, worship, and exalt Allah?' An-No'maan ibn Shareek said, 'We will at least grant you that.'"^[1]

Lessons and Morals

The help that the Prophet ﷺ was seeking was of a very specific kind, was based on certain conditions, and was sought out in a specific manner; in these regards, keep the following points in mind:

- ◆ The Prophet ﷺ began actively to seek help outside of Makkah only after Abu Taalib's death, when the Quraish began to persecute him with a great deal of severity. This is because a person who invites others to Islam cannot properly achieve his aims when he is constantly being persecuted and terrorized.
- ◆ The Prophet ﷺ began actively to seek help outside of Makkah not based on a conclusion that he ﷺ arrived at through his own reasoning, but instead based on a command from Allah ﷻ.

^[1] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/142, 143, 145), and in it are additions that are not recorded by As-Saalihee, in *Subul-Ar-Rashaad* (2/596, 597).

- ◆ That the Prophet ﷺ went to tribal leaders and not to common tribesmen was specific and unique to the situation, for it was only tribal leaders who could help ensure his protection. This in no way means that the poor and weak should be neglected; throughout his life, the Prophet ﷺ invited the poor, the weak, the rich, and the strong to Islam. However, in this particular situation, the Prophet ﷺ needed the help of someone strong who could defend him from the Quraish.
- ◆ It is clear from the Prophet's *Seerah* that the Prophet ﷺ sought help and support from other tribes for two main reasons: First, to protect those who wanted to convey the message of Islam; and second, to pave the way for the Prophet ﷺ to take over the leadership of the tribe he ﷺ wanted help from, based on the principles of the message he ﷺ was spreading.
- ◆ The Prophet's negotiations with the Banu 'Aamir clan highlight an important aspect of the Prophet's *Da'wah*. The leaders of Banu 'Aamir seemed prepared to help the Prophet's *Da'wah*; they were even excited about their future prospects with the Prophet ﷺ among them. Nonetheless, the Prophet ﷺ effectively rejected their offer, refusing to give any guarantee whatsoever that, as a reward for their help, one among them would be handed the reins of leadership in the future. This is because Islamic propagation simply means inviting people unto Allah ﷻ. And so the basic prerequisites of one who believes in Islam and is willing to support it, are that he is sincere to Allah ﷻ and that the only thing he wants is to please Him ﷻ. These prerequisites, and not political ambitions, are the reasons for which he makes sacrifices in the first place. Or in other words, when one volunteers to promote the cause of Islam, one must do so, not for a worldly, ulterior motive, but for the sake of Allah ﷻ only. Even on a smaller scale, anyone who wants to promote Islam – whether monetarily or otherwise – must not stipulate a reward that comes in the shape of a job or any other worldly profit. It is a dangerous sign indeed, and a negative indication about one's character,

when one shows concern not for Islam, but for personal gain. Yahyaa ibn Mu'aadh Ar-Raazee said, "When you smell the desire of leadership in a person, then know that he will not be successful."^[1] In the short term, the Prophet ﷺ could have benefited greatly from the Banu 'Aamir tribe - through the achievement of safety and strength. But the Prophet ﷺ was not looking at the short-term, and he ﷺ was not looking for people whose hearts were tainted by corrupt and ambitious motives for self-gain.

- ◆ In another sense as well, the Prophet ﷺ was not looking for just anybody to protect and support him. He ﷺ wanted a tribe that was not restricted by a treaty with a foreign power, especially one that ran contrary to the principles and goals of Islam, and one that exposed Islam, Muslims, and the tribe in question to near certain destruction. After all, in the case of Banu Shaibaan, their treaty was not with a tribe of lesser, equal, or slightly greater strength, but rather with one of the superpowers of that era, the Persian Empire.

And at any rate, partial protection would not have solved anything. For if Kisra were to try and capture the Prophet ﷺ or send forces to fight him and his Companions ﷺ, Banu Shaibaan was not willing to stand up to Kisra and fight against his forces.

- ◆ True, Banu Shaibaan did not in the end provide shelter for the Prophet ﷺ; nonetheless, they acted truthfully and honourably and respectfully, which is much more than can be said about the other tribes the Prophet ﷺ visited. The leaders of Banu Shaibaan spoke candidly, telling the Prophet ﷺ about the forces they had at their disposal. And rather than cover up their true motives by showing disdain for the Prophet's message, they calmly told the Prophet ﷺ their weak and vulnerable situation vis-à-vis the Persian Empire.

^[1] Refer to *Al-Jihaad Wal-Qitaal Fis-Siyaasatush-Shar'iiyyah* (1/412).

Allah ﷻ decreed that, about 10 or more years later, it would be the Banu Shaibaan tribe who, after they became Muslims, would be the first to fight against the very kings they once feared. During the caliphate of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ, it was Al-Muthannah ibn Haarithah ؓ who led the Muslim armies that conquered Iraq. And Muthannah's people – Banu Shaibaan – were among the bravest fighters in the wars that took place against the Persians. When they were non-Muslims, the people of Banu Shaibaan feared the Persians a great deal – so much so that they never even thought about fighting them. And it was their fear of the Persians that made them reject the Prophet's *Da'wah*, even though they were convinced of its truthfulness. In this context, we should appreciate the greatness of Islam, through which Allah ﷻ raises true Muslims in this world, making them leaders on earth and dwellers of Paradise in the Hereafter.

Positive Developments In Al-Madeenah

Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah Al-Ansaaree ؓ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed in Makkah for ten years, following people to their homes, to ‘Ukkaadh (a famous marketplace), to Majannah, and to Minnah during the seasons (of *Hajj*) – saying all along, ‘Who will shelter me? Who will help me, so that I can convey the message of my Lord, and in return for that he will have Paradise?’ He ﷺ would do this to the degree that a man would come out from Yemen or Mudar, and his people would go to him and say, ‘Beware of the young man of the Quraish. Do not let him allure you.’ He (the person from Yemen or Mudar) would walk among his men, and they would point to him (i.e., to the Prophet ﷺ) with their fingers. And this situation continued until Allah ﷻ sent us to him from Yathrib (i.e., Al-Madeenah). We provided him with shelter, and we believed in him. A man from among us would go out (to him in Makkah) and believe in him. And he (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) would teach him the Qur’an. That man would return to his family members, who would embrace Islam because he embraced Islam. And this continued until no house from the houses of the *Ansaar* remained without having in it a group of Muslims, who openly declared and practiced their Islam.”^[1]

^[1] *Musnad Ahmad* (3/322, 323-339), with a *Hasan* chain.

Early Contacts With The *Ansaar* During The *Hajj* And '*Umrah* Seasons

1) The Islam of Suwaid ibn As-Saamit ﷺ

Whenever the Prophet ﷺ heard that an Arab of status and ranking was visiting Makkah, he ﷺ would go to him and invite him to Islam. So when Suwaid ibn As-Saamit, brother of Banu 'Amr ibn 'Auf, visited Makkah for *Hajj* or for '*Umrah*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to him, for Suwaid was known among his people as *Al-Kaamil* (the complete one),' based on his bravery, his poetry, his honour, and his lineage. After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ presented Islam to him, Suwaid said, "Perhaps that which is with you is similar to that which is with me?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked, 'And what is with you?' Suwaid said, "The Scroll of Luqmaan." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Present it to me." After Suwaid presented it to him, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, this speech is good, but that which is with me is better than this: It is Qur'an (i.e., that which is recited) that Allah ﷻ has revealed to me; it is guidance and light." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited the Qur'an to him and invited him to Islam, and he was not far from accepting it. He said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Verily, this speech is good," after which he left Makkah and returned to his people in Al-Madeenah. Shortly after this occurred, Suwaid was killed by the Khazraj. His people were convinced that Suwaid had embraced Islam before dying, and they would afterwards say about him, "We feel that, when he was killed, he was a Muslim." Suwaid died on the Day of Bu'aath, during a fierce battle that took place between the various tribes of Al-Madeenah.. At any rate, there is nothing to indicate that Suwaid ibn As-Saamit ﷺ actually invited his fellow tribesmen to Islam. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

2) Iyaas ibn Mu'aadh ﷺ

Abu Al-Haisar ibn Raafai' was the head of a delegation that

visited Makkah prior to the Prophet's migration to Al-Madeenah. The delegates were from the Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal clan, and among them was Iyaas ibn Mu'aadh ؓ. Their purpose for visiting Makkah was to form an alliance with the Quraish against people from the Khazraj tribe. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard about their arrival, he ﷺ went to them and said, "Do you want that which is better than the purpose for which you have come?" They said, "And what is that?" He ﷺ said, "I am the Messenger of Allah. Allah ﷻ has sent me to (His) slaves for me to invite them to worship Allah, without associating anything (i.e., any partner) with Him; and He has sent down to me the Book (i.e., the Qur'an)." The Prophet ﷺ went on to explain Islam to them, and to recite part of the Qur'an to them. Iyaas ibn Mu'aadh, who was still a young man, said to his fellow delegates, "This, by Allah, is better than that for which you have come." Abu Al-Haisar took a handful of dirt and used it to strike his face. He then said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Leave us alone, for upon my life, we have come for a purpose other than this." Iyaas remained silent, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood up and left them. Shortly after the delegates returned to Al-Madeenah, the Bu'aath war took place between the Aus and Khazraj tribes. In the early stages of that war, Iyaas ibn Mu'aadh ؓ was killed. But his fellow clansmen who were with him when he was dying said, "Until he died, he indeed continued to say, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah; Allah is the Greatest; all praise is for Allah; and How perfect Allah is!'" They had not the least shred of doubt that he had died a Muslim.

The Native Dwellers Of Al-Madeenah

Begin To Embrace Islam

The first palpable change in Al-Madeenah occurred when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ met a group of delegates from the Khazraj tribe. The meeting occurred during *Hajj* season, at 'Aqabah in Minaa. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ began the unplanned meeting by asking them, "Who are you?" They said, "We are members of

the Khazraj (tribe).” Knowing that the Khazraj lived in Al-Madeenah alongside Jewish tribes that had settled there, the Prophet ﷺ asked, “You are from the allies of the Jews.” They said, “Yes.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Will you not sit down so that I can speak to you.” They said, “Yes,” and so they sat down together and the Prophet ﷺ invited them to Islam and recited to them the Qur’an.

Though they had never met the Prophet ﷺ, what he invited them to was familiar to them, and so was he. For years, the Jewish inhabitants of Al-Madeenah threatened them, saying that a Prophet in Arabia was about to appear and that, when he did appear, the Jews would follow him and would, with his help, destroy the Aus and Khazraj tribes.

After the Prophet ﷺ presented Islam to them, they said to one another, “O people, by Allah, you know that he is indeed the Prophet that the Jews threatened you about, so do not let them beat you to him.” They answered the Prophet’s *Da’wah* and entered the fold of Islam, and they told the Prophet ﷺ about how the two native tribes of Al-Madeenah – the Aus and the Khazraj – were constantly at war with each other. “And hopefully Allah will unite them through you,” they said. “We will go to them and invite them to your affair (i.e., to Islam). Then if Allah unites them through you, there will be no man who will be stronger and more honourable than you.” This delegation consisted of six men, all of whom embraced Islam: Abu Umaamah ibn As’ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ, ‘Auf ibn Al-Haarith ؓ, Raafai’ ibn Maalik ؓ, Qutbah ibn ‘Aamir ؓ, ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Aamir ؓ, and Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Riaab ؓ.^[1] When they returned to Al-Madeenah, they mentioned the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to their people and invited them to Islam. Islam spread quickly, so that very shortly thereafter the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was being spoken about in every single house of Al-Madeenah.

The six delegates mentioned above were the forerunners of Islam

^[1] Refer to *Sharh Al-Mawaahib* by Az-Zarqaanee (1/361).

in Al-Madeenah. Not only did they embrace Islam, but also each one of them took a covenant upon himself that he would invite his people to Islam. True to their word, they all fulfilled the terms of that covenant. Beginning with their families and moving on to fellow clansmen, they preached the message of Islam.

That first meeting with Al-Madeenah's inhabitants was, unlike many meetings with leaders of other tribes, completely unplanned by the Prophet ﷺ. It was a meeting that Allah ﷻ decreed to be of great importance in the course of the Prophet's *Da'wah*; furthermore, it was a pivotal moment in human history.

In the briefest of moments, those six delegates went from being blind idol-worshippers to pure Islamic Monotheists. And the long months of searching for the right tribe to support the cause of Islam finally came to a fruitful end. Islam was now going to be a force to be feared in Arabia, and soon all over the world.

It is important to note that the above-mentioned meeting that took place at Al-'Aqabah involved no pledge of allegiance. They were only six in number, and, though they embraced Islam, they probably did not feel that it was their right to make a covenant on behalf of their people without first returning to them and discussing the matter with them.

The First Pledge of Al-'Aqabah

One year after the first meeting took place between the Prophet ﷺ and delegates from the Khazraj, another delegation came, one that consisted of twelve men, ten from the Khazraj and two from the 'Aus. That ten members of the Khazraj came while two members of the 'Aus came indicates two points: First, the *Da'wah* efforts of the previous year's delegates were concentrated mainly among the Khazraj; and second, Muslims among the Khazraj made a breakthrough by convincing some members of the 'Aus to embrace Islam; and thus a new phase of harmony and unity between the two tribes had begun in earnest.

Again, the delegates met the Prophet ﷺ at Al-'Aqabah, but this

time around, they made a pledge, one that is remembered as the First Pledge of Al-'Aqabah. 'Ubaadah ibn As-Saamit ؓ, a member of the Khazraj tribe, later said, "I was among those who were present at the First Al-'Aqabah (pledge). We were twelve men, and we gave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ the pledge of women (i.e., a pledge that does not involve a promise to fight); and that was before fighting was made obligatory upon us. We pledged to not associate partners with Allah in worship; to not cheat or fornicate; to not kill our children; to not come up with falsehood that we fabricate between our hands and feet (scholars have suggested various interpretations of this phrase, one of them being that the heart is intended, since it lies between one's hands and legs, and since the tongue interprets what is in a person's heart); and to not disobey him regarding something good (to which he commands us). (He ﷺ said,) 'If you live up to these (conditions), then you will have Paradise. But if you perpetrate any of those (sins), then your affair is with Allah ﷻ: If He wills, He will forgive (you); and if He wills, He will punish (you).'"^[1] The articles of the above-mentioned pledge are the very same that are found in the pledge that women would give later on, which is why it became known as "The Pledge of Women."^[2]

The Prophet ﷺ sent one of his Companions ؓ, Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ؓ, back with the delegates, instructing him to teach them the Qur'an and about the teachings of Islam. Because Mus'ab ؓ became famous quickly in Al-Madeenah as a teacher of the Qur'an, the people there gave him the title, *Al-Muqree* (the reciter, or the one who teaches recitation). Mus'ab ؓ was needed in Al-Madeenah to preach Islam, to be sure, but for another reason as well: to lead people in Prayer. True, the Aus and the Khazraj were now living in harmony under the banner of Islam; but still, they

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of Punishments, chapter, "Legal Punishments are Atonements for those Upon Whom They are Executed"; *Hadeeth* number: 1709.

^[2] Refer to *Al-Ghurabaa Al-Awwaloon* (pg. 185).

were new to Islam and they had fought against one another for many long and bitter years. Their leaders therefore feared that if a man from the Aus was chosen to lead prayer, members of the Khazraj would become angry, and vice-versa. And so it was appropriate for an outsider, one of the Prophet's Companions from Makkah, to come and lead people in prayer, so as to avoid any disputes.

The Prophet ﷺ chose Mus'ab ibn 'Umar ؓ based on his many good qualities. Mus'ab ؓ was upright and enthusiastic; he ؓ had memorized much of the Qur'an; he had good manners and strong faith; he was wise; and he ؓ had tact and charisma. Within a matter of months, Mus'ab ؓ was able to spread Islam to most of Al-Madeenah's houses. Through personal, face-to-face *Da'wah* efforts, he ؓ garnered the support of important leaders of Al-Madeenah, such as Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ؓ and Usaid ibn Hudair ؓ. When these two Madanee leaders embraced Islam, many others from their people did the same.

During at least the early part of his stay in Al-Madeenah, Mus'ab ibn 'Umar ؓ was a guest of As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ. Mus'ab ؓ played a vital role in spreading Islam throughout Al-Madeenah. He ؓ would invite the chief of a clan to Islam, that chief would embrace Islam, and then all of his fellow clansmen would follow suit. As a *Daa'ee* (caller to Islam) in Al-Madeenah, Mus'ab ؓ was a practical, real-life translation of this Verse of the Qur'an:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَحَدِّثْ لَهُم بِأَلَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾ (١٦٥)

"Invite (mankind, O Muhammad ﷺ) to the Way of your Lord (i.e., Islam) with wisdom (i.e., with the Divine Inspiration and the Qur'an) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Path, and He is the Best Aware of those who are guided." (Qur'an 16: 125)

The Story Of How Usaid Ibn Hudair ؓ And Sa'd Ibn Mu'aadh ؓ Embraced Islam

The two native tribes of Al-Madeenah were the Aus and the Khazraz; but as with the Quraish, each of these tribes was divided into various subtribes or clans. One such subtribe was called Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal, and it was headed by two chieftains: Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ؓ and Usaid ibn Hudair ؓ.

When Sa'd and Usaid, who were still polytheists, heard of Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ؓ and his *Da'wah* activities, Sa'd said to Usaid, "May you have no father! Go to these two men (referring to Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ) who have come to our homes to make fools of the weak ones among us. Drive them away and forbid them from coming to our homes. Had I not been as close to As'ad ibn Zuraarah as you know me to be, I would have taken care of the matter for you. As'ad is my cousin, and I cannot show hostility towards him." Usaid took his spear and began to search out for Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ. When the latter two saw him, As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ said, "He is the chief of his people, and he is coming to you. So be true to Allah when you deal with him." Mus'ab ؓ replied, "If he sits down, I will speak to him."

Seeing his targets, Usaid went to them and then stood over them in an insulting manner. Without introducing himself or greeting either Mus'ab ؓ or As'ad ؓ, Usaid gruffly said, "What has brought you here? And why do you make fools of the weak ones among us? Leave us if you value your lives!" Mus'ab ؓ became neither angry nor frightened. With the attitude of one who is calm and sure of the truthfulness of his message, Mus'ab ؓ said, "Will you not sit down and listen. If you are pleased with the matter (I will now explain to you), then accept it. And if you dislike it, then we will stop doing that which you dislike?"

"You have spoken justly," said Usaid, after which he drove his spear into the ground and sat down beside Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ. Mus'ab ؓ spoke to Usaid about Islam and recited to him the Qur'an. Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ are related to have later said

about Usaid ؓ, "By Allah, we saw Islam (i.e., a readiness to embrace Islam) in his face even before he spoke, in terms of the brightness and easygoingness (we read on his features)."

When Mus'ab ؓ was done explaining Islam to Usaid, the latter said, "How wonderful and beautiful this speech is! How does one do if one wants to enter into this religion?" They said, "Take a shower and purify yourself and your garment; then bear witness to the testimony of truth (i.e., none has the right to be worshipped but Allah); and then pray."

Usaid immediately took a shower and purified his garments; he ؓ then bore witness to the testimony of truth, after which he ؓ stood up and performed two units of prayer.

When Usaid ؓ completed his prayer, he said to Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ, "Indeed, I have left behind a man named Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh. If he follows you both, then no one from his people will remain behind (rather, they will all follow what he does). I will indeed send him to you now."

Pulling his spear out of the ground, Usaid ؓ got up and returned to Sa'd and his people, who were, upon Usaid's arrival, gathered together in their place of assembly. When Sa'd saw Usaid approaching, he said, "I swear by Allah, Usaid ibn Hudair ؓ has come to you with a face that is different from the one he had when he left you (a while ago)!"

When Usaid ؓ stood before the gathered crowd, Sa'd ؓ said, "What did you do?" Usaid ؓ said, "I spoke to the two men, and by Allah, I saw nothing wrong with them. I forbade them (from spreading their ideas), and they said, 'We will do whatever pleases you.' But then I was told that the children of Haarithah (another subtribe in Al-Madeenah) are headed towards As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ in order to kill him. They are doing so because they have found out that he is your cousin, and they want to show you that they have broken their covenant with you."^[1]

Sa'd ؓ stood up feeling mixed emotions: On the one hand, he was

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abu Shuhbah (1/442).

furious with the children of Haarithah; and on the other hand, he was afraid for his cousin's life. Taking up his spear in his hand, he turned to hurry away, but first he angrily said to Hudair ؓ, "I don't think that you have taken care of anything!"

When Sa'd reached As'ad ؓ, he found that both As'ad ؓ and Mus'ab ؓ were safe and sound; he then realized that Usaid ؓ had mentioned the children of Haarithah only so that he would go to As'ad ؓ and listen to what he and Mus'ab ؓ had to say. Nonetheless, he stood over them disparagingly and said to As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ, "By Allah, O father of Umaamah, had it not been for the fact that you and I are related, you would not have held such hopes from me. Do you (think it fair to, or do you dare to) come into our homes with that which we dislike?"

Prior to Sa'd's arrival, As'ad ؓ had seen him approaching and said, "By Allah, coming to you now is the chief of the people he has left behind. If he follows you, then no two people among them will differ among themselves (rather, they will all be united as Muslims)."

After Sa'd finished addressing As'ad ؓ, Mus'ab ؓ said to Sa'd, "Will you sit down and listen? If you are pleased with the matter (I will present to you), and if you desire (to follow it), then accept it. And if you dislike it, then we will stop doing that which you dislike." Sa'd ؓ said, "You have spoken justly," after which he drove his spear into the ground and sat down. Mus'ab ؓ presented Islam to him, and recited to him the Qur'an. Moosa ibn 'Uqbah ؓ later recounted that Mus'ab ؓ had recited the first part of *Soorah Az-Zukhruf*. Also, Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ later on said about their meeting with Sa'd ؓ, "By Allah, we knew (a readiness to embrace) Islam in his face even before he spoke, in terms of the radiance and easygoingness (of his features)."

Like Usaid ؓ had done, Sa'd ؓ asked Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ, "What do you do if you want to submit and enter the fold of this religion?" They said, "Take a shower and become purified, and purify your two garments (i.e., your upper and lower garment). Then bear witness to the testimony of truth; and after that, perform two units of prayer." Sa'd ؓ forthwith got up to take a

shower and purify his garments. When he finished doing that, he bore witness to the testimony of truth; and after that, he performed two units of prayer.

After he finished praying, Sa'd ؓ took his spear and returned to where his people were assembled. As Sa'd ؓ approached them, they saw him and said, "We swear by Allah, Sa'd has returned to you with a face that is different from the one he had when he left you (a short while ago). When Sa'd ؓ stood over them, he ؓ said, "O children of 'Abdul-Ashhal, what do you know about my status among you?" They said, "You are our chief, the best among us in judgment, and the most blessed leader we have." Sa'd ؓ said, "Then it is forbidden for the men and women among you to speak to me until you believe in Allah and His Messenger." Sa'd ؓ later said, "By Allah, by nightfall, every single man and woman in the houses of Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal entered the evening as a Muslim."

As'ad ؓ and Mus'ab ؓ returned to the former's home and continued to invite people to Islam. Not before long, every house in Al-Madeenah (to the exclusion of the districts that were inhabited by Jewish tribes) had in it men and women who had embraced Islam. One notable exception was a man named 'Amr ibn Thaabit ibn Waqsh ؓ, who was known as Al-Usairam and who delayed embracing Islam until the Day of Uhud. Having never performed a single prostration for Allah ﷻ, 'Amr ibn Thaabit ؓ embraced Islam on the day of the Battle of Uhud and was martyred on that very same day. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said about him ؓ that he was from the dwellers of Paradise (may Allah be pleased with him). Ibn Ishaq related with an acceptable chain that Abu Hurairah ؓ used to say, "Tell me about a man who entered Paradise without ever having performed even a single prayer." If the person or people he ؓ was talking to did not know the answer, Abu Hurairah ؓ would say, "Usairam Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal (i.e., 'Amr ibn Thaabit ibn Waqsh ؓ)."^[1]

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Shuhbah (1/444) and to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 291). The *Hadeeth* is also related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, in the Book of *Jihaad* and *As-Siyyar* (*Hadeeth* number: 2808).

Lessons and Morals

- 1) There were many factors that helped promote the spread of Islam in Al-Madeenah; among them are the following:
 - a) Allah ﷻ instilled an inherent sense of modesty, gentleness, and moderation in the people of the Aus and Khazraj. Whereas the people of Makkah were arrogant and intransigent, the people of the Aus and Khazraj were humble and flexible, qualities that they shared with their ancestors from Yemen. For when a delegation from Yemen visited Al-Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ said, "The people of Yemen have come to you; they indeed have gentle and soft hearts."^[1] Both the Aus and Khazraj tribes are originally from Yemen; their great grandparents had emigrated from it centuries earlier.^[2] And Allah ﷻ praised the native dwellers of Al-Madeenah, saying:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ بَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾﴾

"And those who, before them, had homes (in Al-Madeenah) and had adopted the faith, – love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Banu An-Nadeer), and give them emigrants preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful." (Qur'an 59: 9)

- b) Bitter wars, such as "The Day of Bi'aath," had taken place between the Aus and Khazraj tribes; these wars led to the death of many of their elder chieftains who, like the elder chieftains of the Quraish and Thaqeef, would likely have opposed and not supported the Prophet's *Da'wah*. With the

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, the Book of Al-Maghaazee, chapter, "The Arrival of Al-Ash'ariyyoon and the people of Yemen"; *Hadeeth* number: 4388.

^[2] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abul-Hasan An-Nadwee (pg. 154).

death of Al-Madeenah's elders through long years of war, both the Aus and Khazraj tribes were headed by a new generation of fresh and young leaders, people who were flexible and willing to embrace the truth. Furthermore, Al-Madeenah was in a state of political chaos; no one leader or group of leaders existed who could rule and control all of Al-Madeenah's inhabitants; they thus needed someone who would unite them and help heal the wounds of past division. 'Aishah ؓ said, "The Day of Bi'aath (i.e., the War of Bi'aath) was a matter that Allah ﷻ presented to His Prophet ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived (in Al-Madeenah), after they had become divided and their nobles had been killed and injured. Allah presented it (i.e., the War of Bi'aath) to His Messenger ﷺ, as a means of making them enter into the fold of Islam."^[1]

- c) Being the neighbours of three Jewish tribes, the people of the Aus and Khazraj had knowledge – albeit limited in scope – about past Prophets and divinely revealed religion. Conversely, the people of the Quraish lived nowhere near People of the Book – Jews and Christians – which made them more close-minded than their counterparts in Al-Madeenah. At best, certain members of the Quraish gathered, through their travels or through meeting visitors from foreign lands, scattered reports about divinely revealed religion.

In short, the Quraish never gave much thought to Jews and Christians, since members of both faiths were such a distant reality to them. On the other hand, dealing with Jews was a daily reality for the Aus and Khazraj; they were neighbours, and alliances were always shifting. Sometimes, the Jews of Al-Madeenah would join up with the Khazraj to fight against the Aus; and sometimes, they would join up with the Aus to fight against the Khazraj. And the Jews would threaten both the Aus and the Khazraj about a Prophet whose time to appear was near at hand; they claimed that they would follow him, and would,

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Merits, chapter, "The Merits of the *Ansaar*"; *Hadeeth* number: 3777.

with his help, destroy both the Aus and the Khazraj, in spite of the fact that the latter two tribes outnumbered the Jews of Al-Madeenah. Allah ﷻ referred to their threats in the Noble Qur'an:

﴿وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ (٨٩)

“And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book (this Qur'an) from Allah confirming what is with them [the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)], although aforetime they had invoked Allah (for the coming of Muhammad ﷺ) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came to them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the Curse of Allah be on the disbelievers.” (Qur'an 2: 89)

Allah ﷻ decreed for six native inhabitants of Al-Madeenah to meet the Prophet ﷺ and embrace Islam at his hands. When they met him, they rejoiced, knowing that he ﷺ was indeed the Prophet that the Jews were threatening them about. From his noble character and demeanour, they realized that the awaited Prophet was not sent to elevate one nation – the Jews – above mankind, but rather to bring all of mankind out of darkness and into the light of pure Islamic Monotheism. Those six chosen delegates returned to Al-Madeenah and spread Islam throughout the houses of its inhabitants.

- 2) The first six delegates of the Khazraj fulfilled their covenant, inviting not only members of their own tribe, but also members of the very same tribe they fought wars against for many decades. That is the effect Islam has on true believers: it unites and heals the wounds of past enmity. And so in the following year, members of the Khazraj tribe returned to Makkah, bringing with them two members of the Aus tribe. The Khazraj and Aus tribes then became as one people, to the extent that most Muslims today don't even know that there were two native

tribes in Al-Madeenah; instead, they refer to all of Al-Madeenah's native dwellers as being the *Ansaar*, the "Helpers" who welcomed and honoured Muslim migrants from Makkah.

- 3) After the First Pledge of Al-'Aqabah, Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ؓ went to Al-Madeenah as a personal representative of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. In the year that followed, Mus'ab ؓ worked day and night to invite people to Islam, to teach them the Qur'an, and to plan, along with the help of the Aus and Khazraj, for the soon-to-be-formed Muslim country. Perhaps never in history has an individual ambassador had such a huge impact in the span of just one year – and of course that was through the guidance and help of Allah ﷻ. The First Pledge of Al-'Aqabah involved a promise to act; Mus'ab ؓ helped facilitate action and the practical application of that pledge.

And the native dwellers of Al-Madeenah responded to Mus'ab's *Da'wah*; they too longed for the formation of a Muslim country and the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ to achieve that end – a sentiment that was echoed in the words of Jaabir ؓ: "For how long will we leave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to go around and be driven away in the mountains of Makkah! For how long will we leave him to be terrified over there?"^[1]

In the thirteenth year of the Messenger of Allah's Prophethood, just prior to the *Hajj* season, Mus'ab ؓ returned to his native land and gave a detailed account to the Prophet ﷺ of the situation in Al-Madeenah. He ؓ explained how Islam had permeated the ranks of the Aus and Khazraj tribes and that they were ready for a new pledge; moreover, based on their numbers and unity, they were able to provide protection to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Hajj season was near at hand, and a historically crucial meeting was about to take place. More than seventy Muslims from Al-Madeenah were coming to perform *Hajj*, and they were planning to secretly meet with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

^[1] Refer to *At-Tahaaluf As-Siyaasee* (pg. 71).

The Second Pledge Of Al-‘Aqabah

Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah ؓ said, “We (i.e., the Muslims of Al-Madeenah) said: ‘For how long will we leave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to go around and be driven away in the mountains of Makkah! For how long will we leave him to be terrified over there?’ And so seventy of our men left to meet him and reached him during the (*Hajj*) season. We made an appointment to meet him in the mountain-pass of Al-‘Aqabah. (To ensure secrecy,) we went to him one or two men at a time, until we were all gathered with him. We said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, upon what conditions shall we make a pledge to you?’ He ﷺ said, ‘Pledge to me that you will listen and obey, both when are active and lazy; that you will spend (for the cause of Islam), both in poverty and in richness; that you will enjoin good and forbid evil; that you will speak for the cause of Allah, fearing not, when you do something for Allah, the blame of a blamer; and that you will support me and protect me when I come to you, in the same way that you protect yourselves, your wives, and your children. And (if you fulfill these conditions,) you will have Paradise.’ We stood up before him and made the (said) pledge to him. As‘ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ - who was the youngest among them - took him by the hand and said, ‘Go slowly, O people of Yathrib. We traveled such a far distance with our camels only because we knew that he is indeed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; that to bring him out (of Makkah) today means parting from all Arabs, as well as the death of the best among you; and that you will be struck by swords. Either

you are people who will remain patient upon all of that, and your reward will be with Allah; or you fear that you will show cowardice (in light of all of the above-mentioned eventualities). So make clear which it is, for you will have a better excuse with Allah (if you make your intentions clear now, rather than make a promise now and break it later).' They said, 'Move out of the way, O As'ad, for by Allah, we will never leave, abstain from, or break the terms of this pledge.' We all stood up and made the (aforementioned) pledge to him. He ﷺ took a covenant upon us and mentioned the conditions (of the pledge), and he said that, in return for fulfilling those conditions, he would give us Paradise."^[1]

Because, as opposed to the First Pledge of Al-'Aqabah, the Second Pledge entailed a promise to support and defend the Prophet ﷺ, 'Ubaadah ibn As-Saamit ؓ called it the Pledge of War. Ka'ab ibn Maalik Al-Ansaaree ؓ, one of the 73 who visited the Prophet ﷺ, also gave an account of what took place during the taking of the second pledge. He ؓ said, "We left (Al-Madeenah) among the polytheistic pilgrims of our people. (When we arrived there,) we made an appointment to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at Al-'Aqabah, in the middle of the days of At-Tashreeq. We kept our affair (and our meeting) a secret from the polytheists who came with us. On the appointed night, we slept in our campsite with our people. Then, when one-third of the night passed, we left our campsite in order to go to our appointment with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. We left stealthily, concealing ourselves and moving just as quietly as doves move. When we finally gathered in the mountain-pass at Al-'Aqabah, we were a total of 73 men; and accompanying us were two of our women: Nusaibah bint Ka'ab ؓ and Asmaa bint 'Amr ؓ. We waited in the mountain-pass until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to us. Al-'Abbaas ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ came with him. Although he was still upon the religion of his people, Al-'Abbaas wanted to be present in the affair of his nephew to make sure that everything went well for

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah As-Saheehah* (1/199).

him. When he (i.e., the Messenger of Allah ﷺ) sat down, the first person to speak was Al-'Abbaas ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib; he made it clear that the Messenger ﷺ was adequately protected by his people, the children of Haashim, but that he ﷺ still wanted to migrate to Al-Madeenah. In saying so, Al-'Abbaas wanted to make sure that the *Ansaar* (the Muslims of Al-Madeenah) would protect his nephew; and if they couldn't - Al-'Abbaas suggested - they should leave him be in Makkah. The *Ansaar* asked that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ speak and mention for himself and for his Lord any conditions he liked. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'I take a pledge from you that you will protect me from that which you protect your women and children.' Al-Baraa ibn Ma'roor ؓ took him by the hand and said, 'Yes, and by the One Who has sent you with the truth, we will protect you from that which we protect our *Uzur* (*Uzur* literally means clothing; what is intended here is women or souls, so that the meaning of his words is: We will protect you from that which we protect our women and our own selves). So take our pledge, O Messenger of Allah. By Allah, we are the people of war, and the people of weapons. We have inherited (these traits) one nobleman from another nobleman (through many generations).' Abul-Haitham ibn At-Tayyihaan ؓ cut him off and asked, "O Messenger of Allah, between us and people (i.e., the Jews) are ropes (i.e., a binding relationship, since we are neighbours), and we are about to break them (by following you). If we do this, and then Allah makes you victorious, will you maybe then return to your people and leave us (he was alluding to the fear that, if the Prophet ﷺ then left them, they would be left on their own to fight neighbouring Jewish tribes; in what followed, the Prophet ﷺ assured him that he would not, under any circumstances, leave them).' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ smiled and said, 'Rather, blood is blood, and destruction is destruction. I am from you, and you are from me. I will wage war against those whom you wage war against, and I will make peace with those whom you make peace with.' He ﷺ then said, 'Send to me from among yourselves twelve chiefs (or representatives), whose pledges will be binding upon

their people (i.e., upon the rest of you).’ They accordingly sent twelve chiefs, nine from the Khazraj and three from the Aus. (Afterwards) the Messenger ﷺ requested that they return to their campsite. (But before they did,) they heard the *Shaitaan* (the Devil) yell out a warning to the Quraish. Al-‘Abbaas ibn ‘Ubaadah ibn Nadlah ؓ said, ‘By Allah, Who has sent you with the truth, if you want, we will pounce upon the people of Minaa (i.e., the Quraish) tomorrow with our swords.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘We were not commanded to do that; so instead, return to your belongings (i.e., your campsite).’ They returned to their belongings, and then in the morning, a group of leaders from the Quraish went to them, asking them about what they had heard regarding their pledge of allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ and their inviting him to migrate (to Al-Madeenah). The polytheists among the Aus and Khazraj (who knew nothing of what had transpired the night before) swore that they did no such thing; meanwhile, the Muslims among them looked at one another. The people of the Quraish stood up to leave, and among them was Al-Haarith ibn Hishaam ibn Al-Mugheerah Al-Makhzoomee, and he was wearing new sandals. Acting as if I wanted to participate with the people in what they were saying (i.e., in terms of swearing that they made no pledge), I said (to one of the leaders of the Aus or Khazraj), ‘O Abu Jaabir, are you not able to take – and you are one of our chiefs – sandals that are like the ones that this young man from the Quraish has?’ Haarith heard what I said. He then removed his sandals from his feet and flung them towards me; and he said, ‘By Allah, you will indeed wear them.’ Abu Jaabir said (to me), ‘Be silent! By Allah, you have angered this young man. Return to him his sandals!’ I said, ‘No, by Allah, I will not return them.’”^[1]

^[1] Refer to *Majma’ Az-Zawaaid* (2/42-46). In his commentary of *Al-Ghazaalee’s Fiqhus-Seerah*, Al-Albaanee – may Allah have mercy on him – said regarding the chain of this *Hadeeth*, “This chain is authentic.” And as is mentioned in *Al-Fath*, Ibn Hibbaan also ruled that it is authentic (7/475).

Lessons and Morals

- 1) The implications of the Second 'Aqabah Pledge were truly far-reaching, for it was the precursor of all ensuing victories for Islam. The situation was at a low-point for Muslims in Makkah; the Quraish showed no signs of letting up in their persecution of the Muslims, and the tribes of Arabia showed no willingness to help the Prophet's *Da'wah*. When the situation looked bleakest, Allah ﷻ blessed the Prophet ﷺ with helpers in Al-Madeenah, helpers who not only pledged to support and defend the Prophet ﷺ, but also acted on their promise, fulfilling all of the articles of their pledge. For decades, the native dwellers of Al-Madeenah had fought for profit, leadership, and power. Having faith in Allah ﷻ, they now fought just as they did before, but not for prestige, power, or leadership positions; rather, only to raise the Word of Allah ﷻ above all else.
- 2) We know that Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab would follow the Prophet ﷺ around and try to prevent him from inviting chiefs of Arab tribes to Islam. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ had to plan beforehand whenever he ﷺ wanted to meet with the chief of a tribe, so as to avoid being followed and harassed by the two above-mentioned leaders of the Quraish. These are some of the precautionary measures the Prophet ﷺ and the delegates of Al-Madeenah took in preparing to meet for the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah:
 - a) So as to avoid being seen and found out, the people of the pledge planned their meeting with the Prophet ﷺ very carefully. After all, of the five-hundred or so pilgrims that came from Al-Madeenah, more than seventy of them came to make the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah; so the suspicion of the others was certainly going to be aroused if more than seventy of them disappeared at once. The appointed time of the meeting was on the second day of At-Tashreeq, after the passing of one-third of the night. Everybody would be in deep

- sleep at that time. Furthermore the right-most mountain-pass was chosen as the meeting place, since it was far away from any other group of people. This prevented them from being accidentally seen by someone who might wake up in the middle of the night. Finally, they proceeded to the appointment one at a time, or in groups of two, so as to avoid arousing the suspicion of others.
- b) Both the time and place of the meeting were carefully guarded secrets. Al-'Abbaas ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib knew about the meeting and attended it to make sure that the pledge was in the best interests of the Prophet ﷺ. 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ also knew about the meeting; he acted as a lookout at the mouth of the mountain-pass. And Abu Bakr ؓ knew about the meeting as well; he ؓ acted as a lookout on the road that led to the meeting place. Other than these three, no other Muslim in Makkah knew about the meeting, even though the others could be trusted, for secrecy was of paramount importance if the planned meeting was going to be a success.
 - c) Even after the Prophet ﷺ and the delegates took all possible precautions, something happened that was out of their control: *Shaitaan* (the Devil) announced their meeting to the Quraish. Rather than panic, the Prophet ﷺ remained calm, ordering the delegates to return to their campsite. He ﷺ refused to act hastily and attack the Quraish, knowing that he ﷺ was not commanded to do so by Allah ﷻ and that the time was not right to begin fighting. Then, on the following morning, when the Quraish came to interrogate Al-Madeenah's delegates, the Muslims among them remained silent, and one of them even had the presence of mind to say something that would divert Quraish's leaders from thoughts about the previous night's meeting.
 - d) The Prophet ﷺ chose to meet the delegates during the last night of *Hajj*, which is the thirteenth night of Dhul-Hijjah. At the beginning of the next day, pilgrims were going to begin

their return journeys to their homelands. That would leave precious little time for the Quraish to take action even if they found out about the Pledge that Al-Madeenah's delegates made to the Prophet ﷺ.

- 3) All but the last of the pledge's articles were so comprehensive in scope that no one could later have an excuse not to fulfill them. It is easier to listen and obey when one is feeling active and healthy, and more difficult when one is feeling lethargic, weak, or lazy. The Prophet ﷺ ordered full obedience in both cases. Likewise, it is easier to spend for a good cause when one is rich, and more difficult when one's circumstances are straitened; and so the Prophet ﷺ stipulated that they spend for the cause of Islam in richness and in poverty. And finally, it is easier to order to what is good and to forbid evil when people will accept the advice that is given; and it is harder to do so when people will criticize or mock or blame the person who is advising them. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ made it clear that, regardless of the audience and the circumstances, one must always order to what is good and forbid evil. As for the last article, some room for interpretation was left open – for an important wisdom, to test the faith of the *Ansaar*. According to the last article, the Muslims of Al-Madeenah pledged to support and protect the Prophet ﷺ; this could have loosely been interpreted to mean protecting the Prophet ﷺ within Al-Madeenah only. Yet the first big opportunity to militarily aid Islam did not involve protecting the Prophet ﷺ; rather, it involved leaving Makkah and overtaking the caravan of the Quraish and fighting outside of Al-Madeenah in the Battle of Badr. The *Ansaar* showed that they were ready and willing to fulfill the articles of the pledge, and to do even more. And so they told the Prophet ﷺ that they were willing to fight for the cause of Islam both inside of Al-Madeenah and abroad.
- 4) After the Prophet ﷺ finished enumerating the articles of the pledge, the leader of the delegates, Al-Baraa ibn Ma'roor ؓ, answered without hesitating in the least, saying, “Yes, and by

the One Who has sent you with the truth, we will protect you from that which we protect our *Uzur* (*Uzur* literally means clothing; what is intended here is women or souls, so that the meaning of his words is: We will protect you from that which we protect our women and our own selves). So take our pledge, O Messenger of Allah. By Allah, we are the people of war, and the people of weapons. We have inherited (these traits) one nobleman from another nobleman (through many generations)." There is an interesting story about Al-Baraa ibn Ma'roor ؓ that is worth mentioning here. When Al-Baraa ؓ left Al-Madeenah with his people (to go to Makkah), he ؓ said to them, "Verily, I have developed an opinion, and by Allah, I don't know whether you will agree with me regarding it or not." They asked, "And what is it?" He ؓ said, "I have come to the view that I will never show the Ka'bah my back; instead, I will pray towards it (thus making it his Qiblah instead of Jerusalem)." They said to him, "By Allah, the only information that has reached us regarding this matter is that the Prophet ﷺ prays to Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions; but more specifically here, Jerusalem) only, and we do not want to act differently than he does." On their way to Makkah, whenever it would be time for prayer, the people of Al-Madeenah would face north, towards Jerusalem; meanwhile, Al-Baraa ؓ would face south, towards the Ka'bah. They continued in that manner until they reached Makkah. Upon entering *Al-Masjid Al-Haraam*, they saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was sitting down with his uncle, Al-'Abbaas. Seeing them approach, the Prophet ﷺ asked Al-'Abbaas, "Do you know these two men, O Abul-Fadl?" He said, "Yes, he is Al-Baraa ibn Ma'roor ؓ, chief of his people; and the other is Ka'ab ibn Maalik ؓ." The Prophet ﷺ said, "(Ka'ab) the poet?" Al-'Abbaas ؓ said, "Yes." When they met, Al-Baraa ؓ told the Prophet ﷺ about how he prayed during the trip to Makkah; he ؓ then said, "What do you think, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "You were upon a *Qiblah* (i.e., Jerusalem); would that you remained patient upon it." Al-Baraa ؓ then returned to praying towards

the *Qiblah* of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ - Jerusalem. On his deathbed, Al-Baraa ordered his people to turn him towards the direction of the Ka'bah. Al-Baraa ؓ died in the month of Safar, just one month before the Prophet ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah. Before dying, Al-Baraa bequeathed one-third of his wealth to the Prophet ﷺ. Though he ؓ accepted the bequest, the Prophet ﷺ then returned the money to Al-Baraa's son. Al-Baraa ؓ was thus the first person to bequeath one-third of his wealth, a practice that later became common based on the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ. From the above-mentioned story about how Al-Baraa ؓ wanted to pray towards the Ka'bah, we see how firmly the Prophet's Companions ؓ adhered to the Prophet's commands. In belief and in practice, they rejected any opinion that was contrary to the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ. It was a principle they applied throughout their lives; what is so impressive is that they even applied it fully when they had just entered into the fold of Islam. In this context, it is important to note that Al-Baraa ؓ was a tribal leader and that the opinions of tribal leaders were tantamount to commands that had to be obeyed by every single member of the tribe. But once the people of Al-Madeenah embraced Islam, they knew that obedience to the Prophet ﷺ was of paramount importance, while obedience to anyone else - even a tribal leader - hinged upon conformity to the Prophet's *Sunnah* and commands.

- 5) We learn important lessons from the fact that the Prophet ﷺ asked the 70 or so delegates to choose 12 representatives from among themselves. First, by asking them to choose the delegates, instead of naming them himself, the Prophet ﷺ was promoting the Islamic concept of mutual consultation. Second, the delegates acted fairly by resorting to proportional representation, since more members of the Khazraj were present at the Pledge than were members of the Aus; in fact, there were three times more members of the Khazraj than there were of the Aus, which is why they chose to send nine representatives from the Khazraj and only three from the Aus.

Third, since he ﷺ was to remain in Makkah for a while longer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ appointed the twelve representatives to manage the course of Islamic *Da'wah* in Al-Madeenah. In appointing the twelve delegates to take charge of matters in Al-Madeenah, instead of sending a representative from Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ perhaps did not want the Muslims of Al-Madeenah to feel like strangers who needed an outsider to watch over them; they were now a part of the Muslim nation; they were now the people of Islam, its protectors, and helpers.

- 6) In the end, the leaders of the Quraish came to know about the details of the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah. They wanted to pursue Al-Madeenah's delegates, but it was too late, for all but two of them were already well on their way back to their homeland. The two that remained behind – probably for personal business – were Sa'd ibn 'Ubaadah ؓ and Al-Mundhir ibn 'Amr ؓ. An angry mob consisting of members of the Quraish caught up with both of them at a place called Adhaakhir, which is situated not too far from Makkah. Al-Mundhir managed to escape, but not Sa'd ؓ; the angry mob took him, tied his hands behind his neck, and dragged him by his forelocks until they returned to Makkah. Once there, they began to beat him. Had the beating continued, Sa'd ؓ would probably have died as a result. But two members of the Quraish, Al-Haarith ibn Harb ibn Umayyah and Jubair ibn Mut'im, interceded on his behalf and rescued him. They helped Sa'd ؓ only because he would protect their caravans as they passed through Al-Madeenah. So if they were to harm Sa'd ؓ, they would no longer be able to pass through Al-Madeenah with their trading caravans, since Sa'd's relatives would be looking to exact revenge.

Sa'd ؓ did not in the least mind experiencing physical punishment at the hands of the Quraish; in fact, he felt honoured at being able to share in the hardships of his brother Muslims in Makkah. And he ؓ did not, of course, blame

Muslims for not being able to help him, for he knew that, given their weak situation, they could not protect even themselves.

- 7) When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ refused Al-'Abbaas ibn 'Ubaadah's offer to fight the Quraish, he ﷺ was teaching a very important lesson to all Muslims. He ﷺ said, "We were not ordered to do that; rather, return to your belongings (i.e., your campsite)." That lesson is this: it is not up to Muslims to decide when to fight their enemies; had that been the case, chaos and disorder would have resulted. Instead, they must fight only when Allah ﷻ commands them to fight, and they must then execute His Command according to the principles of the *Shariah*. Furthermore, they must not act spontaneously as individuals; rather, they must follow their leader and act as an organized group. Consider this: Had the Muslim delegates of Al-Madeenah disobeyed the Prophet's command and attacked the Quraish, they probably would have suffered a crushing defeat, and consequently the Muslims of Makkah would have suffered greatly. In fact, a migration to Al-Madeenah would probably not have taken place.
- 8) When men would pledge allegiance, the Prophet ﷺ would extend his hand. The man who was giving the pledge would then extend his hand and make his pledge. As for women – in regard to the two women who came and all other women afterwards – they would make a pledge in speech only, without the Prophet ﷺ shaking their hands. In fact, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ never in his life shook the hand of a stranger woman.

As for the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah, all of Al-Madeenah's delegates made the pledge; even the two women who came along made the "Pledge of War." And both of them fulfilled their pledge. As for Nusaibah bint Ka'ab (Umm 'Ammaarah) ؓ, she was injured with 16 wounds during the Battle of Uhud. On the Day of Uhud, she went out with her husband, Zaid ibn 'Aasim ibn Ka'ab ؓ. She had with her a container of water,

from which she would provide drink to Muslim soldiers. When the Muslims were being defeated, and most of them were fleeing in various directions, a small number of them remained with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, acting as a shield around him and protecting him from the blows of the Quraish. Nusaibah ؓ, even though she was a woman, was one of those people. She actually fought with a sword in order to protect the Prophet ﷺ, and as a result, she was inflicted with serious wounds. Later on, Nusaibah ؓ was present during the Ar-Ridwaan Pledge. And a few years later, Moosailamah "the Liar," chopped up her son's body, one limb at a time; yet that did not weaken her faith. Then she was with the Muslim army during the Battle of Al-Yamaamah; and again, she fought until she became inflicted with a total of 12 wounds; this time around, she lost her hand. And as for Asmaa bint 'Amr ؓ, she is from the Banu Salamah clan, and it is said that she is either the mother of Mu'aadh ibn Jabal ؓ or his cousin.

- 9) When one studies the lives of the Muslims who made the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah, one finds that, out of a total of seventy-three of them, about one-third were martyred either during the Prophet's lifetime or after his ﷺ death. Also, one finds that about half of them participated in all of the Prophet's battles; and that almost all of them – about seventy of them – participated in the Battle of Badr.

Based on these numbers, we can clearly see that the *Ansaar* fulfilled the covenants that they made with Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. Some of them were martyred, and the rest that lived on participated in leading the Muslims to the many victories they enjoyed during the early golden years of Islam. Theirs were souls that were ready to sacrifice everything, seeking no reward in return other than Paradise. No one after them came even close to their achievements and their willingness to make sacrifices for the cause of Islam.

4

The Migration To Al-Madeenah

Paving The Way Towards Migration

The migration to Al-Madeenah did not occur in an instant; rather, it was preceded by preparations; and when it did take place, it occurred in stages. To be sure, the Prophet ﷺ planned for the migration to Al-Madeenah, and his planning involved two different kinds of preparations: one had to do with preparing those who were going to migrate to Al-Madeenah; and the other involved making preparations in the city to which they were to migrate.

1) Preparing the *Muhaajiroon* (those who ended up migrating to Al-Madeenah)

Their preparation involved years of spiritual training, much of which we have discussed in previous chapters. After all, the migration to Al-Madeenah was not an excursion or a leisure trip; instead, it was a trip that meant permanently leaving behind one's homeland, one's family, and one's wealth – not to mention the many fond memories of life spent in that land, the means of earning a livelihood, and so on. In short, the migration involved a great sacrifice; people who migrated had to be first convinced and satisfied that migrating to Al-Madeenah was in their best interests. They became satisfied through years of spiritual training at the hands of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, but also

through realizing the reality of their situation in Makkah, for it was no longer possible – even if they wanted – to coexist with the Quraish in the same city. Brutal persecution left them with no choice but to leave Makkah permanently and to seek Allah's Bounties elsewhere.

Qur'anic Verses that were revealed in Makkah taught the Companions ﷺ about the eventual need to migrate. The situation for Muslims in Makkah was very difficult indeed, and so Allah ﷻ reminded them that His earth is spacious, alluding to the fact that they could migrate elsewhere:

﴿قُلْ يٰعِبَادِ ٱللَّهِ ءَامِنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ رَبَّكُمۡ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُواْ فِي هَذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ
وَٱرْضُ ٱللَّهُ وَسِعَةٌ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّٰبِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ۝١٠﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “O My slaves who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), be afraid of your Lord (Allah) and keep your duty to Him. Good is (the reward) for those who do good in this world, and Allah’s earth is spacious (so if you cannot worship Allah at a place, then go to another)! Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning.” (Qur’an 39: 10)

After this last Verse was sent down to the Prophet ﷺ, Soorah Al-Kahf was the next to be revealed. In Soorah Al-Kahf, Allah ﷻ mentioned the story of certain youths who believed in their Lord and migrated from their homeland to a cave. With the revelation of this story, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ got a sense of how, at times, it is necessary to leave one's family and country for the sake of one's beliefs.

Then Verses were revealed which spoke explicitly about migration. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ فِي ٱللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُواْ لَنَنۡوِيۡتَهُمۡ فِي ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً
وَلَآ أَجۡزَ ٱلْآخِرَةِ أَكۡبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعۡلَمُونَ ۝٤١﴾ ﴿ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝٤٢﴾

“And as for those who emigrated for the Cause of Allah, after suffering oppression, We will certainly give them goodly residence in this world, but indeed the reward of the Hereafter will be greater, if they but knew! (They are) those who remained patient (in this world for Allah’s sake), and put their trust in their Lord (Allah Alone).” (Qur’an 16: 41, 42)

And at the end of the same Chapter, Allah ﷻ emphasized the same Message, saying:

﴿ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا ثُمَّ جَاهَدُوا وَصَبَرُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝۱۱۰﴾

“Then, verily! Your Lord – for those who emigrated after they had been put to trials and thereafter strove hard and fought (for the Cause of Allah) and were patient, verily, your Lord afterward is, Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Qur’an 16: 110)

Also, the migration to Abyssinia was a practical form of training for some Companions ﷺ, who learned firsthand what it meant to leave behind their homeland, families, and wealth.

2) Preparations in Yathrib (Al-Madeenah)

As bad as things were in Makkah, and as promising as the situation seemed in Al-Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ didn’t migrate right away. In fact, it is interesting to note that the Prophet ﷺ waited for more than two years to leave Makkah and make Al-Madeenah his permanent home.

The Prophet ﷺ waited until he ﷺ was sure that he ﷺ had a wide following in Al-Madeenah, which is why sending Mus’ab ﷺ as a Daa’ee to Al-Madeenah was so important. Beyond waiting for Islam to spread in Al-Madeenah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ waited until the Muslims of Al-Madeenah showed signs of readiness, or rather eagerness, for him to migrate to them. And sure enough, during the talks that led to the Second Pledge of Al-‘Aqabah, Al-Madeenah’s Muslims showed ample readiness: Not only did they ask the Prophet ﷺ to come live among them, they

also showed that, right then and there, they were willing to fight the Quraish at Minaa. All they were waiting for was the Prophet's permission, and they would begin fighting immediately, but the Prophet ﷺ instead told them, "We were not commanded to do that." What is important in this context is that the native dwellers of Al-Madeenah showed that they were ready not only to welcome the Prophet ﷺ and Makkah's Muslims, but also to bear the responsibilities that that migration entailed.

Reflections On Certain Verses Of Soorah Al-'Ankaboot

Soorah Al-'Ankaboot is generally recognized as being one of the last Chapters of the Qur'an that was revealed during the Makkan phase of the Prophet's biography. Allah ﷻ began the Chapter by saying:

﴿الْعَمَّ ۝ أَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ۚ ۝ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ ۚ ۝ أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ يَسْفُتُونَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ۚ﴾

"Alif-Lam-Mim. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings.] Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested. And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood of) those who are liars, (although Allah knows all that before putting them to test). Or those who do evil deeds think that they can outstrip Us (i.e., escape Our Punishment)? Evil is that which they judge!." (Qur'an 29: 1-4)

In terms of what relates to the Prophet's biography, there are three matters of particular interest in Soorah Al-'Ankaboot:

- 1) Even though the chapter is recognized as being "Makkan (i.e., it was revealed during the Makkan phase of the Prophet's biography)," it contains the mention of the word, "hypocrites."

It is known that hypocrisy mainly rears its ugly head when Muslims are strong, when a person who disbelieves on the inside outwardly claims to be a Muslim, fearing that not doing so will be detrimental to his personal interests. But during the Makkan phase of the Prophet's biography, it was the polytheists who were strong, so there was no reason for anyone to pretend to be a Muslim. So why were the hypocrites referred to in a Makkan Verse? Allah ﷻ said in Soorah Al-'Ankaboot:

﴿وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ﴾ ⑪

"Verily, Allah knows those who believe, and verily, He knows the hypocrites [i.e., Allah will test the people with good and hard days to discriminate the good from the wicked (although Allah knows all that before putting them to test)]." (Qur'an 29: 11)

Scholars have suggested more than one explanation for this occurrence. For example, some scholars of *Tafseer* suggest that the above-mentioned Verse is Madanee (i.e., it was revealed during the Madanee phase of the Prophet's biography, the phase that consisted of everything that occurred in the Prophet's life after his migration to Al-Madeenah), but was placed in a Makkan Chapter. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

- 2) In Soorah Al-'Ankaboot, the command is given to argue with the People of the Book (i.e., Jews and Christians) with good words and in a good manner. Through that command, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ were being prepared for the next phase of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, one during which Muslims would be in close contact and proximity to People of the Book, namely, the three Jewish tribes that lived in Al-Madeenah. Allah ﷻ instructed Muslims to avoid being the first to show harshness in speech when dealing with People of the Book. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ وَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَهُنَا وَإِلَهُكُمْ وَحْدٌ وَنَحْنُ

لَمْ يُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ فَالَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَمِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

“And argue not with the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better (with good words and in a good manner, inviting them to Islamic Monotheism with His Verses), except with such of them as do wrong, and say (to them): ‘We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you; our Ilah (God) and your Ilah (God) is One (i.e., Allah), and to Him we have submitted (as Muslims).’ And thus We have sent down the Book (i.e., this Qur’an) to you (O Muhammad ﷺ), and those whom We gave the Scripture [the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) aforetime] believe therein as also do some of these (who are present with you now, like ‘Abdullah bin Salam) and none but the disbelievers reject Our Ayaat [(proofs, signs, verses, lessons, etc., and deny Our Oneness of Lordship and Our Oneness of worship and Our Oneness of Our Names and Qualities: i.e., Islamic Monotheism)].” (Qur’an 29: 46, 47)

3) In Verse 56 of Soorah Al-‘Ankaboot, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَسِعَةٌ فَإِنِّي فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾ ﴿٥٦﴾

“O My slaves who believe! Certainly, spacious is My earth. Therefore worship Me (Alone).” (Qur’an 29: 56)

Here, Muslims were being prepared to migrate elsewhere within Allah’s spacious earth; perhaps, and Allah ﷻ knows best, the Muslims of Al-Madeenah had already begun welcoming Muslims from Makkah after the first Pledge of Al-‘Aqabah. Regardless of whether this was the case or not, and regardless of exactly when Soorah Al-‘Ankaboot was revealed, the exhortation to migrate to Al-Madeenah is clearly understood from the above-mentioned Verse. It is as if it is being said in Verse 56: ‘If it is difficult for you to practice your religion in Makkah, then migrate elsewhere within Allah’s spacious earth – to Al-Madeenah in particular, where you can safely and openly practice your faith.’ Whenever

the issue of leaving one's homeland is raised, one begins to worry about how one can earn sustenance in a new and strange land. And that is why, a few Verses later, Allah ﷻ mentioned that His sustenance is not limited to a specific region of earth; rather, Allah ﷻ provides for His slaves wherever they may be. And in the end, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ who migrated to Al-Madeenah became wealthier and more prosperous than ever before, for only a short while after they migrated they became rulers and governors of various lands, having been blessed with conquest followed by conquest. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَايْنٍ مِّن دَابَّةٍ لَا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾ (١٠)

"And so many a moving (living) creature there is, that carries not its own provision! Allah provides for it and for you. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower." (Qur'an 29: 60)

By reminding the believers about another reality, namely, the inevitability of death, Allah ﷻ implicitly exhorted them to struggle, to prepare for the Hereafter, and to migrate for the sake of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ﴾ (٥٧)

"Everyone shall taste the death. Then unto Us you shall be returned." (Qur'an 29: 57)

Understood within the context of the events that were taking place around the time when *Al-'Ankaboot* was revealed, this Verse means: 'You will die and will soon be held accountable for your deeds. You must therefore prepare for the Hereafter.' Implied in this Verse is an exhortation to migrate to Al-Madeenah, for when a person is certain that death can overtake him at any moment, he does not much mind leaving his homeland.

Ibn Katheer said that the above-mentioned Verse means: "Wherever you are, death will overtake you; so be obedient to Allah, and be in that place wherein where Allah ﷻ commands you

to be, since that is better for you. Death is inevitable; none can escape it; and then everyone must return to Allah ﷻ. If one is obedient to Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ will reward him with the best of rewards.”^[1]

In another Verse Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُؤْتِيَنَّهُمْ مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نِعَمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ۝٥٨﴾
 ﴿رَبِّهِمْ يَنْوَكُّونَ ۝٥٩﴾

“And those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to them We shall surely give lofty dwellings in Paradise, underneath which rivers flow, to live therein forever. Excellent is the reward of the workers. Those who are patient, and put their trust (only) in their Lord (Allah).” (Qur’an 29: 58, 59)

“Those who are patient” refers to those who remain patiently steadfast upon their religion; those who migrate to Allah, who part from their families, seeking Allah’s Countenance and His Reward.

The First Group Of Migrants

The leaders of the Quraish became furious once they learned about the Second Pledge of Al-‘Aqabah, a reaction that is not surprising considering the ramifications of that Pledge. And they of course vented their anger by increasing the intensity with which they persecuted the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ. ‘Aishah ﷺ said:

“When the seventy (delegates from Al-Madeenah) left the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he ﷺ was delighted, for Allah ﷻ had just provided him with protection and with a people of war, of willingness (to fight and defend the Prophet ﷺ), and of courage. The polytheists attacked the Muslims with more intensity once they learned about their imminent departure (from Makkah).

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (3/359).

They bore down heavily upon the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, and they abused them (unconscionably). They did to them that which they never previously did, in terms of how they cursed and hurt them. The Companions ﷺ of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ complained about that to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and they asked him permission to migrate. He ﷺ said, 'I have been shown the place to which you will migrate; I saw a *Sabkhah* (salty land that yields little vegetation), full of date-palm trees, between *Labitain* (two areas of land that are replete with volcanic rocks). And had *As-Saraat* been a land of date-palm trees and *Sibaakh* (plural of *Sabkhah* - salty land that yields little vegetation), I would have said that it was it (i.e., that *As-Saraat* was the land to which you will migrate.' He ﷺ remained where he ﷺ was for a number of days, after which he went out to his Companions, clearly being happy (for some reason). He ﷺ said, 'I have been informed of the place to which you will migrate; it is Yathrib (i.e., Al-Madeenah). Whoever wants to leave (Makkah), then let him go there.' The people (i.e., the Muslims) begin to set out (for Al-Madeenah); they would coordinate (their departures); they would give comfort to one another; and they would leave, keeping news of their departure a secret. The first person from the Messenger of Allah's Companions ﷺ to reach Al-Madeenah was Abu Salamah ibn 'Abdul-Asad ﷺ; next to arrive after him was 'Aamir ibn Rabee'ah ﷺ, and with him was his wife, Laylaa bint Abee Hathmah ﷺ, the first woman-traveler to reach Al-Madeenah. Thereafter, one group followed by another, the Messenger of Allah's Companions ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, and they stayed with the *Ansaar* (the native inhabitants of Al-Madeenah from the Aus and Khazraj tribes) in their homes. The *Ansaar* provided shelter for them, supported them, and comforted them. And prior to the Prophet's arrival in Al-Madeenah, Saalim ﷺ, the freed slave of Abu Hudhaifah ﷺ, would lead the *Muhaajiroon* (those who migrated to Al-Madeenah from Makkah) in prayer at Qubaa. When the Muslims began leaving for their migration to Al-Madenah, the Quraish became furious with them. A group from the *Ansaar* who pledged the last (i.e., the Second) Pledge to the

Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned to Al-Madeenah (along with the others); but then, when the first person to migrate set out for Qubaa, they (i.e., a few Muslims from Al-Madeenah) went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Makkah, so that they could accompany his Companions ﷺ during their migration. Those were, therefore, *Muhaajiroon* from the *Ansaar* (they were from the *Ansaar* because they were native to Al-Madeenah, and they were *Muhaajiroon* in the sense that they made a journey from Makkah to Al-Madeenah). They were: Dhakwaan ibn 'Abd Qais ﷺ, 'Uqbah ibn Wahb ibn Kaldah ﷺ, Al-'Abbaas ibn 'Ubaadah ibn Nadlah ﷺ, and Ziyaad ibn Lubaid ﷺ. All (i.e., almost all) of the Muslims (of Makkah) went to Al-Madeenah; the only ones among them who remained behind in Makkah were the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Abu Bakr ﷺ, 'Alee ﷺ, those who were put to trial (in their religion), those who were sick, and those who were too weak to leave."^[1]

What The Quraish Did To Harm Those Who Wanted To Migrate To Al-Madeenah, And The Difficulties That Some Companions ﷺ Consequently Faced

The leadership of the Quraish did all that was in their power to prevent Muslims from leaving Makkah. Neither did they let them practice their religion, nor did they allow them to leave. Here are some of the tactics that the Quraish resorted to, in order to prevent Muslims from migrating to Al-Madeenah:

1) They broke up families

Let us allow the Mother of the Believers, Umm Salamah Hind bint Abu Umayyah ﷺ, to explain in her own words the tragic story of her migration and the migration of her husband, Abu Salamah ﷺ:

"When Abu Salamah ﷺ resolved to go to Al-Madeenah, he ﷺ put a saddle (and some provisions) on his camel for me, and carried me on top of it. And he ﷺ put my son, Salamah ibn Abu Salamah ﷺ, in my lap. Steering his camel, he then left with me. But when

^[1] Refer to *Tabaqaat ibn Sa'd* (1/325).

men from the clan of Banu Al-Mugheerah ibn Abdullah ibn 'Umar ibn Makhzoom (i.e., Umm Salamah's clan) saw him, they accosted him and said, 'This is your soul, regarding which you have overcome us (i.e., you believe in Islam, even though we tried to prevent you from doing so), but what about this female relative of ours (i.e., we have a right over her)? Why should we let you take her away to another land?' They pulled the reins of the camel away from his hand, and took me away from him. The children of Banu 'Abdul-Asad, the kinsfolk of Abu Salamah ؓ, became angry as a result, and they said, 'No, by Allah! If you take her away from our companion (i.e., relative), we will not leave our son (i.e., Salamah ؓ) with her.' The men from both clans pulled my son, Salamah ؓ, towards themselves (like a tug-of-war), until they ended up pulling off his hand. The children of Banu 'Abdul-Asad then went away with him; meanwhile, the children of Al-Mugheerah kept me in their custody, and my husband, Abu Salamah ؓ, went to Al-Madeenah. My husband, my son, and I were thus divided. I would go out every morning to Al-Abtah (a place that is situated between Makkah and Minaa), and I would sit there and cry until the evening. I continued doing that for an entire year – or for almost an entire year. Then, one day, a man from the children of my uncle – a man from the Banu Al-Mugheerah clan – passed by me and, seeing my situation, felt pity for me. He said to the children of Al-Mugheerah, 'Will you not allow this poor woman to leave. You have divided her from her husband and son!' And so they said to me, 'Go to your husband, if you want.' After that took place, the children of Banu 'Abdul-Asad returned my son to me. I saddled my camel and mounted it, and I took my son and placed him in my lap. Then I set out, going to my husband in Al-Madeenah. And I had no one from Allah's creatures with me. I said (to myself), 'I will go with whomever I find, until I reach my husband.' When I reached At-Tan'eem, I met 'Uthmaan ibn Talhah ibn Abee Talhah (who was still a polytheist), brother of the children of 'Abdud-Daar. He asked me, 'Where are you going, O daughter of Abu Umayyah?' I said, 'I want to go to my husband in Al-Madeenah.' He said, 'And is

anyone with you?' I said, 'No, by Allah; no one but Allah and this young son of mine.' He said, 'By Allah, I cannot then leave you (or he said a close approximation of this).' He took the reins of the camel, and set off with me. By Allah, I never accompanied any Arab man whom I think to be more honourable than him. If we reached a stopping place, he would make the camel kneel, and then he would move back, away from me (allowing me to descend in such a way that he could not see me). When I descended, he would then move away with my camel, remove from it its load, and tie it to a tree. Then he would move away from me, going to a tree, under which he would lie down. When it was almost time to leave again, he would go to my camel, saddle it and load it (with my supplies), and move it forward (towards me). Then he would move away from me and say, 'Mount it.' After I mounted it and sat upright upon it, he would come and take it by its reins. Then he would steer it until the next stopping place. He continued to do that with me, until he led me to Al-Madeenah. When he saw the town of Banu 'Amr ibn 'Auf at Qubaa, he said, 'Your husband is in this town,' and indeed, that is where Abu Salamah ؓ was staying. (He said,) 'Enter it upon the blessing of Allah,' after which he departed, returning back to Makkah. (And Umm Salamah used to say,) 'By Allah, I do not know of dwellers of any Muslim household that were afflicted with what the family of Abu Salamah was afflicted with. And I never saw a companion who was more honourable and noble than 'Uthmaan ibn Talhah.'"[1]

This is just one example of how the Quraish resorted to cruel and inhuman tactics to achieve their aims. They tried to stop Abu Salamah ؓ from migrating by separating him from his wife and son. Before Abu Salamah's very eyes, his wife and son were being dragged away from him. Nonetheless, when *Eemaan* (faith) takes a strong hold over one's heart, it is impossible for one to choose anything or anyone over his faith, even if that means losing one's own son or wife. And so for the sake of Allah ﷻ, Abu Salamah ؓ

[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah As-Saheehah* (1/202, 203).

migrated in spite of the cruel tactics whose purpose it was to stop him from leaving Makkah. Such is the effect that *Eemaan* (faith) has when it reaches the depths of a person's heart. Umm Salamah's sacrifice was perhaps most poignant of all; without her son and husband, she did not lose hope, but instead waited patiently for relief.

'Uthmaan ibn Talhah's role in this story is telling from various angles, particularly because of the fact that, when this story occurred, he was still a polytheist; it was years later, before the Makkan conquest, that he actually embraced Islam. Umm Salamah ؓ knew that 'Uthmaan was a polytheist, but she still praised him for his noble, honourable, and chaste character. Not only did he sacrifice his time and refuse to allow a noble, chaste woman to travel alone; he also acted in a noble and modest manner that truly makes him deserving of admiration. What is perhaps most striking about his demeanour with Umm Salamah ؓ is that he knew that, by her going safely to Al-Madeenah, Quraish's leaders – himself included – were suffering one more loss in their war against Islam.

'Uthmaan ibn Talhah ؓ exemplified through his character the many virtues of Arabs; to be sure, they had faults, but they had many good qualities as well. How can that not be so when Allah ﷻ chose among them the Seal of all Prophets ﷺ and chose them to carry and convey the message of Islam?

Umm Salamah's story further illustrates how Allah ﷻ takes care of his obedient slaves. Once the time came for relief, Allah ﷻ not only softened the hearts of both Umm Salamah ؓ and Abu Salamah's relatives towards her, but also guided 'Uthmaan's heart to help her. That 'Uthmaan ؓ accompanied Umm Salamah ؓ was good for both her and him, for although 'Uthmaan ibn Talhah ؓ embraced Islam years later after the Treaty of Al-Hudaibiyyah, it is very possible that his spiritual journey to the truth began in earnest during his corporeal journey with Umm Salamah ؓ to Al-Madeenah.

2) They resorted to kidnapping

Most of Quraish's efforts were concentrated upon preventing Muslims from leaving Makkah. For the most part, once a Muslim had made it to Al-Madeenah, the Quraish left him alone, feeling that he was out of their reach – but that was not always the case. On at least one occasion, they kidnapped a Muslim in Al-Madeenah and brought him back with them to Makkah. 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ gives the following account of that kidnapping:

"When 'Ayyaash ibn Abee Rabee'ah ؓ, Hishaam ibn Al-'Aas ibn Waail As-Sahmee ؓ, and myself intended to migrate to Al-Madeenah, I made an appointment to meet them at the trees of Adaat (which is situated 12 miles away from Makkah), which belongs to Banu Ghaffaar, and which overlooks Sarif (the name of a valley). We said, "Whoever among us is not there in the morning, then it means that he has been hindered (from coming), so let the other two among us go on (with the migration)." In the morning (of the appointment), 'Ayyaash ibn Abu Rabee'ah ؓ and I were at the trees, and Hishaam ؓ was prevented from coming. He was put to trial, and he succumbed. When we reached Al-Madeenah, we stayed among the children of 'Amr ibn 'Auf at Qubaa. But Abu Jahl ibn Hishaam and Al-Haarith ibn Hishaam had set out in pursuit of 'Ayyaash ibn Abu Rabee'ah ؓ, who was their cousin from their father's side, and their half-brother from their mother. When they reached us in Al-Madeenah – and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was still in Makkah, they spoke to 'Ayyaash ؓ and said, "Verily, your mother has vowed not to allow a comb to touch her head until she sees you and not to seek shade from the sun until she sees you. He felt compassion for her, and so I said to him, "O 'Ayyaash ؓ, by Allah, your people want only to tempt you away from your religion, so be wary of them. By Allah, if lice were to harm your mother, she would comb her hair; and if the heat of Makkah were to become severe upon her, she would seek shade." 'Ayyaash ؓ said, "I will fulfill the oath of my mother; and at any rate, I have wealth there which I will take."

I said, "By Allah, you indeed know that I am among the wealthiest of people among the Quraish. Don't go with them, and you will have half of my wealth." But he refused and insisted upon going with them. When I saw that he insisted upon going with them, I said to him, "If you must do what you will do, at least take this she-camel of mine, for indeed, it is a superior and biddable she-camel. Remain firm upon its back, and if you become suspicious of them (i.e., that they are plotting to assault you in some way), then use it to save yourself (by riding away)." He left with them, riding upon it. When they had reached part of the way, Abu Jahl said to him, "O my brother, by Allah, I find (the back of) my camel to be hard and rough. Will you not carry me behind you on this she-camel of yours?" 'Ayyaash ؓ said, "Certainly." At the same time, they both made their camels kneel to the ground, making it possible for Abu Jahl to switch camels. When they were upright upon the ground, Abu Jahl and Haarith attacked him, overcame him, and tied him up. They took him to Makkah and put him to trial (regarding his religion), and he succumbed. (Meanwhile, in Al-Madeenah) we would say, "Allah will accept neither obligatory deeds nor voluntary deeds nor repentance from those who succumbed. They are a people who knew Allah, but then returned to disbelief because of a calamity that afflicted them." And they (i.e., those who succumbed after being put to trial in their religion) would say the same thing to themselves. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached Al-Madeenah, Allah ﷻ revealed these Verses regarding them, regarding what we said (about them), and regarding what they said to themselves:

﴿قُلْ يَبَادِيُ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ
 اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ٥٧﴾ وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ
 وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصِرُونَ ٥٨﴾ وَأَنذِرُوا
 أَحْسَنَ مَا أَنزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ بَغْتَةً وَأَنتُمْ لَا
 تَشْعُرُونَ ٥٩﴾

"Say: 'O 'Ibadi (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. And turn in repentance and in obedience with true faith (Islamic Monotheism) to your Lord and submit to Him (in Islam), before the torment comes upon you, then you will not be helped. And follow the best of that which is sent down to you from your Lord (i.e., this Qur'an, do what it orders you to do and keep away from what it forbids), before the torment comes on you suddenly while you perceive not!"
(Qur'an 39: 53-55)

With my own hand, I wrote these Verses down on a scroll, and I sent the scroll to Hishaam ibn Al-'Aas ؓ. Hishaam ؓ said, "When the scroll reached me, I began to read it at Dhee Tuwaa (one of the valleys of Makkah) but I could not understand the meaning of the Verses. And so I said, 'O Allah, make me understand them.' Then Allah ؓ cast into my heart the understanding that they were indeed revealed for us, for what we would say within ourselves, and for what was being said about us. I went back to my camel, sat on it, and caught up with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was by then in Al-Madeenah."^[1]

By reflecting on this story, one perceives an intense battle of wits between 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ and Abu Jahl, the former being a strong and steadfast believer, and the latter being a die-hard polytheist. In the middle was 'Ayyaash ؓ, who was a Muslim but not as strong a believer as 'Umar ؓ, a weakness that Abu Jahl knew and used to his full advantage. From the very beginning, it was battle of strategies to win over 'Ayyaash ؓ. 'Umar ؓ began by coming up with a good plan to leave Makkah; Abu Jahl countered by actually going to Al-Madeenah and preying upon 'Ayyaash's love of his mother, and convincing him to return with him to Makkah. When 'Ayyaash resolved to go

^[1] *Al-Majma' by Al-Haithamee (6/61), and Al-Hijrah An-Nabawiyah Al-Mubaarakah (pg. 131).*

back with Abu Jahl to Makkah, 'Umar ؓ, perceiving the imminent danger to 'Ayyaash's faith, offered to give him half of his wealth if he stayed. Then after 'Ayyaash ؓ refused 'Umar's offer, 'Umar ؓ told him to at least take his fast and dependable camel, so that, if the need should arise, he could escape from Abu Jahl and Haarith, and ride quickly back to Al-Madeenah. Even after he achieved his purpose of taking 'Ayyaash ؓ back with him to Makkah, Abu Jahl was not satisfied with the situation. Perhaps Abu Jahl realized that someone had lent 'Ayyaash ؓ an especially fast camel; or perhaps Abu Jahl wanted to ensure the success of his mission. Whatever the case, Abu Jahl played on 'Ayyaash's innocence and tricked him into getting off of his camel. In all of this, 'Umar ؓ displayed exemplary brotherhood by doing his utmost to save 'Ayyaash ؓ, even showing willingness to give up half of his wealth.

In the end, 'Ayyaash ؓ was overcome by his love and compassion for his mother; to fulfill his mother's oath, he returned to Makkah. His generous nature prevented him from taking 'Umar's wealth; despite 'Ayyaash's good intentions, 'Umar's judgment was sounder; it was as if 'Umar ؓ foresaw all that was going to happen if 'Ayyaash ؓ decided to go back to Makkah. He did in fact foresee what was going to happen, not through a miracle, but through guidance from Allah ﷻ and a sound understanding of Abu Jahl's evil intentions and 'Ayyaash's weak points.

Later on, no sooner were verses revealed that promised forgiveness to those who repented, than 'Umar ؓ inscribed those Verses on a scroll and sent it to 'Ayyaash ؓ and Hishaam ؓ, in a renewed bid to make them leave Makkah and come to Al-Madeenah. After all that happened, 'Umar ؓ did not lose hope with Hishaam ؓ and 'Ayyaash ؓ. Even though 'Ayyaash ؓ did not heed his advice, but instead did the opposite of what he advised, 'Umar ؓ did not then harbour a grudge against him. Instead, 'Umar ؓ continued to show 'Ayyaash ؓ the sincerity, love, and faithfulness of a true brother.

3) They imprisoned Muslims, so as to prevent them from leaving Makkah.

The Quraish resorted to this strategy much more frequently than they did the previous two strategies. Whenever the Quraish apprehended someone who was trying to migrate to Al-Madeenah, they would imprison him in one of their houses and put his arms and legs in chains; furthermore, they would set guards over the prisoners, so as to prevent them from escaping. At times, they would imprison a Muslim in a house that had no roof, an especially severe form of torture to which both 'Ayyaash ؓ and Hishaam ibn Al-'Aas ؓ were subjected. Not only did they endure long hours of lonely solitude; they also had to sit directly under the sun's heat, with no shade to protect them, in one of the hottest places on earth.

In employing the strategy of imprisonment, Quraish's leaders had two goals in mind. The first was to prevent Muslims from migrating to Al-Madeenah. And the second was to set an example of those they captured, so as to discourage other Muslims from attempting to leave Makkah. But not even this ruthless strategy prevented Muslims from migrating to Al-Madeenah, and even some imprisoned Muslims, such as 'Ayyaash ؓ and Hishaam ؓ, actually managed to escape and meet up with their Muslim brothers in Al-Madeenah.

After he migrated to Al-Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ would make a special supplication during prayer for weak Muslims who were forced to remain in Makkah. Abu Hurairah ؓ reported that, when the Prophet ﷺ would raise his head from the bowing position of the final unit of prayer, he ﷺ would say, "O Allah, save 'Ayyaash ibn Abee Rabee'ah ؓ; O Allah save Salamah ibn Hishaam ؓ; O Allah, save Al-Waleed ibn Al-Waleed ؓ; O Allah, save those believers who are weak. O Allah, intensify Your punishment of Mudar (i.e., the Quraish); O Allah, set upon them years of draught that are similar to the years of draught of Yusuf (i.e., that occurred during the lifetime of Yousuf ؑ)." [1]

[1] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Invoking for Rain, *Hadeeth* number: 1006.

The Muslims did not give up when 'Ayyaash ؓ was kidnapped; to the contrary, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent one of his Companions ؓ on a mission to free 'Ayyaash ؓ. That Companion ؓ went to Makkah and, showing much resourcefulness and intelligence, managed to reach the house in which 'Ayyaash ؓ and Hishaam ؓ were being held captive and unshackled them. He ؓ then completed the rescue mission by taking them back with him to Al-Madeenah Al-Munawwarah.

4) They stripped people of their wealth.

Whenever one of the Prophet's Companions ؓ left Makkah, he was risking his well-being, if not his very life. Under such emergency conditions, one had precious little time or opportunity to gather all of one's wealth and take it along during one's journey. In the end, the people of the Quraish usurped all of the wealth that the Muslims had left behind. Suhaib ibn Sinaan An-Namaree ؓ experienced losing all of his wealth, but in a slightly different manner, one that showed his strong faith in Allah ﷻ and his dedication to the cause of Islam.

Suhaib ؓ was not a native dweller of Makkah. Originally, he was from the tribe of An-Namar ibn Qaasit. When the Romans attacked Suhaib's tribe, they captured Suhaib ؓ, who was still a young boy at the time, and enslaved him. Suhaib ؓ learned the language of his captors; and as he grew up, he was bought and sold many times over, until finally, 'Abdullah ibn Jud'aan, one of Makkah's chieftains, purchased him. Suhaib ؓ was well-liked by 'Abdullah ibn Jud'aan, so much so that the old chieftain soon freed him. Although Suhaib ؓ was now a free man, he owed his allegiance to 'Abdullah ibn Jud'aan, so he never enjoyed the status of Makkah's native dwellers. Nonetheless, Suhaib ؓ made the best of his situation and entered into a successful career as a businessman, soon becoming very wealthy, even by the standards of Quraish's nobility.

So when Suhaib ؓ wanted to leave, Quraish's nobles became furious that a foreigner who had risen among their ranks should

now decide to leave them and take his wealth with him. Abu 'Uthmaan An-Nahdee – may Allah have mercy on him – related that, when Suhaib ؓ wanted to migrate to Al-Madeenah, the people of Makkah said to him. "You came here a poor, insignificant person. Then, while you stayed among us, your wealth increased and has reached the high amount it has reached. Then you decide to leave with your own self and your wealth. By Allah, that will not happen."

Suhaib ؓ said, "Suppose I leave my wealth here (for you), will you then step aside and allow me to leave?" They said, "Yes," and so he gave them his entire store of wealth. News of this reached the Prophet ﷺ, who said, "Suhaib has profited! Suhaib has profited!"^[1]

'Ikrimah – may Allah have mercy on him – related a slightly different account, one that does not necessarily contradict the previous account, but rather adds details and context to it. He reported that, when Suhaib left for his migration to Al-Madeenah, the people of Makkah pursued him. When they were about to catch up to him, he ؓ took out his quiver and removed from it 40 arrows. He ؓ then said, "You will not reach me until I place in each man among you an arrow (and he was renowned for his skill as an archer), and then I will resort to my sword. Indeed, you know that I am a man who has left behind two *Qainahs* (a *Qainah* perhaps refers to a large amount of wealth). You may have them (if you do not try to stop me from continuing on my journey)."^[2] 'Ikrimah said, "The following Verse was (then) revealed to the Prophet ﷺ:

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ
بِالْعَبَادِ﴾ (٢٠٧)

"And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the Pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of Kindness to His (slaves)."
(Qur'an 2: 207)

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/477).

^[2] It is a *Mursal* narration that Al-Haakim related (3/398).

When the Prophet ﷺ saw him, he ﷺ said, "Abu Yahyaa (i.e., Suhaib) has profited from the transaction," and he ﷺ then recited to him the (above-mentioned) Verse.

Wonderful Hospitality

The *Ansaar* opened their homes and their hearts to the *Muhaajiroon*, sharing with them their wealth, their homes, and their food. Many of the *Ansaars'* homes were used to accommodate members of the *Muhaajiroon*; these are some examples:

- 1) The house of Mubashir ibn 'Abdul-Mundhir ibn Zanbar at Qubaa. A number of *Muhaajiroon* stayed there: 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ; his family; some of his fellow clansmen; his daughter, Hafsa ؓ, and her husband ؓ; and 'Ayyaash ibn Abee Rabee'ah ؓ.
- 2) The house of Khubaib ibn Isaaf. Khubaib ؓ was the brother of Balhaarith ibn Al-Khazraj, and his house was situated in As-Sunh. Those who stayed with him were Talhah ibn 'Ubaidullah ibn 'Uthmaan ؓ, his mother ؓ, and Suhaib ibn Sinaan ؓ.
- 3) The house of As'ad ibn Zuraarah, which was situated among the homes of the Banu An-Najjaar clan. It is said that Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ stayed in As'ad's house.
- 4) The house of Sa'd ibn Khaithamah. Khaithaman ؓ was the brother of the Banu An-Najjaar, and his house was called the Bachelors' House, since unmarried *Muhaajiroon* men stayed there.
- 5) The house of 'Abuullah ibn Salamah at Qubaa. All of the following *Muhaajiroon* ؓ stayed there under the hospitality of 'Abdullah ibn Salamah ؓ: 'Ubaidah ibn Al-Haarith ؓ; his mother, Sakheelah ؓ; Mistah ibn Uthaathah ibn 'Abbaad ibn Al-Muttalib ؓ; At-Tufail ibn Al-Haarith ؓ; Tulaib ibn 'Umair ؓ; and Al-Husain ibn Al-Haarith ؓ.
- 6) The house of the Banu Jahjabaa clan. The host there was

Mundhir ibn Muhammad ibn 'Uqbah ﷺ, and his *Muhaajiroon* guests were Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awaam ﷺ; his wife, Asmaa bint Abu Bakr ﷺ; Abu Sabrah ibn Abee Ruhm ﷺ; and Abu Sabrah's wife, Umm Kulthoom bint Suhail ﷺ.

- 7) The house of the Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal clan; the host there was Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ibn An-No'maan ﷺ. And his *Muhaajiroon* guests were Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ and his wife, Hamnah bint Jahsh ﷺ.
- 8) The house of the Banu An-Najjaar clan; the host there was Aus ibn Thaabit ibn Al-Mundhir ﷺ. And his guests were 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan ﷺ and his wife, Ruqayyah bint Allah's Messenger ﷺ.

True, the *Muhaajiroon* left behind their homes and wealth; but the *Ansaar* did not let them remember that reality, bestowing upon them such wonderful hospitality as made them feel welcome and at ease in their new surroundings.

What is truly striking about the *Muhaajiroons'* early days in Al-Madeenah is that, even though many people – from different tribes and backgrounds – shared the same home, one cannot find in any history book even a single example of a difference of opinion or quarrel that took place in those houses. Imagine the chaos that results when women from different families and backgrounds have to share the same house for months at a time; yet that is precisely what happened in Al-Madeenah, minus the chaos. To the contrary, the meanings of sacrifice, sharing, and loftiness pervaded Al-Madeenah's streets and homes. Peace reigned in that fledgling country even before the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived there. Everyone worked for the benefit of everyone else. Throughout the annals of history, no immigrant population has ever lived in such harmony with the native dwellers of a land as did the *Muhaajiroon* with the *Ansaar*. And it was nothing other than Islam and faith in Allah ﷻ that brought them together.

We must keep in mind that it was many *Ansaarees*, and not just a few among them, who opened their doors to guests from the

Muhaajiroon. Furthermore, the *Muhaajiroon* stayed on as guests not for days but for months, and so on a daily basis throughout that period, their *Ansaaree* hosts spent their wealth and gave their time in the service of their guests.

We must also remember that the *Muhaajiroon* had previously set an example for the *Ansaar*, in terms of how to sacrifice wealth and comfort for the cause of Islam. For the *Muhaajiroon* had not previously been poor; to the contrary, they owned wealth and houses; yet they left all of that behind in Makkah, seeking the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. They were as the Qur'an described them to be:

﴿لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ﴾ (A)

“(And there is also a share in this booty) for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounties from Allah and to please Him. And helping Allah (i.e., helping His religion) and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ). Such are indeed the truthful (to what they say).” (Qur'an 59: 8)

The Prophet ﷺ had not as of then migrated, and so Al-Madeenah was under the leadership of the 12 chosen representatives from the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah and the more prominent members of the *Muhaajiroon*.

One of the outstanding features of the new Muslim society was a lack of distinction according to class or rank or tribe. The most telling example of this new reality was the fact that Saalim ﷺ, the freed slave of Abu Hudhaifah ﷺ, was leading the Muslims in prayer. He ﷺ deserved to lead because he ﷺ knew the most Qur'an. We must remember that others more wealthy and of nobler lineage were present in Al-Madeenah; tribal chieftains of the *Ansaar* and many of Makkah's most prominent members were in Al-Madeenah, yet they chose a freed slave to lead them in prayer, showing that it was piety and knowledge, not wealth and status, that they valued most.

It behooves us to compare the two lands of migration, Abyssinia and Al-Madeenah. The main distinction between the two lands was that – and this was something new to the *Muhaajiroon* – the *Muhaajiroon* were able to spread Islam throughout Al-Madeenah, whereas the Muslims in Abyssinia were more akin to political refugees than to propagators of their religion. True, Muslims in Abyssinia enjoyed the freedom to practice their religion; nonetheless, they were strangers and were isolated from Abyssinia's Christian society. If they had a palpable impact on Abyssinia's people, it was an impact that was incomplete and lacked comprehensiveness. To be sure, the Muslims in Abyssinia enjoyed a better atmosphere than they had enjoyed in Makkah, but still, they weren't free to spread the message of Islam. Meanwhile, the *Muhaajiroon* enjoyed both freedoms: the freedom to practice their religion and the freedom to spread it to others. And so no sooner did the Muslims in Abyssinia hear news about the migration to Al-Madeenah than they headed there themselves, either directly or through Makkah – except for those who were ordered to remain there. Only one city or country had as of then become a completely Islamic society, and that was Al-Madeenah Al-Munawwarah.

Why Al-Madeenah Was Chosen As The Starting Point And Capital City Of The Muslim Nation

None but Allah ﷻ knows the many wisdoms behind Al-Madeenah being chosen as the place of migration for the Prophet ﷺ and as the stronghold of Islam. Even so, we may still, with our limited knowledge, explore and discuss at least some of the reasons why Al-Madeenah was ideally suited to the cause of Islam.

For one thing, Al-Madeenah, much more so than any other city in Arabia, was blessed with natural barriers that prevented armies from easily entering it. To its west, Al-Madeenah was bordered by an area of land that is called Harratul-Wabraa; and to its east, by a similar area of land that is called Harratul-Waaqim. Both

Harratul-Wabraa and Harratul-Waaqim are replete with black, volcanic rocks; the surface of both areas is jagged, rough, and rocky. And so during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, no army, especially one that had horses and camels, could have launched an attack on Al-Madeenah from either its eastern or western fronts. The southernmost part of Al-Madeenah was filled with crowded gardens of date-palm trees, so that to attack Al-Madeenah from its southern front was like bringing an army through a forest or a jungle rather than through a wide-open field. The northern border of Al-Madeenah was exposed and was thus the only direction from which a foreign army could launch an attack. This geographical reality served the Muslims well, particularly during the Battle of Khandaq. When the Muslims found out that an army of 10,000 soldiers was marching towards them, they dug trenches all along the northern front of Al-Madeenah, thus effectively preventing that army from entering their city.

Also, the native dwellers of Al-Madeenah from the Aus and Khazraj tribes were excellently suited – by nature, disposition, and character – to bear the monumental task of defending Islam and spreading it to the far corners of the earth. They were noble in character and brave on the battlefield; they were accustomed to and loved freedom, for they never gave tributes or paid taxes to any king or foreign ruler.

The Prophet ﷺ was even related to one of the native subtribes of Al-Madeenah, the Banu An-Najjaar clan. The Prophet's grandfather was 'Abdul-Muttalib, and 'Abdul-Muttalib's mother was a woman from the Banu An-Najjaar clan. Her name was Salmaa bint 'Amr and she had married the Prophet's great grandfather, Haashim. When 'Abdul-Muttalib was born, Haashim left him with his mother in Al-Madeenah; then, while 'Abdul-Muttalib was still a child, his uncle, Al-Muttalib, came and took him back with him to Makkah. It must be remembered that blood relations among Arab tribes were highly honoured; from that perspective, it is interesting to note that, when the

Prophet ﷺ first arrived in Al-Madeenah, he ﷺ stayed as a guest of Abu Ayyoob Al-Ansaaree ؓ, a member of the 'Adee ibn An-Najjaar clan – and therefore a distant relative of the Prophet ﷺ.

Another more subtle advantage of Al-Madeenah was that, once the *Ansaar* and *Muhaajiroon* became inextricably linked to one another through the bonds of Islamic brotherhood, all Arabs became symbolically united. That is because all Arabs are descended from one of two forbears, 'Adnaan and Qahtaan. The *Muhaajiroon* were descendants of 'Adnaan; and the *Ansaar*, of Qahtaan. And so the 'Adnaan and Qahtaan Arabs – or at least some of them in those early days of Islam – became united under the banner of Islam. This is especially striking considering how, during pre-Islamic times, the children of 'Adnaan and of Qahtaan were, if not enemies, then at least rivals, competing with one another for the achievements they considered to be important. Once they became Muslims, *Shaitaan* (the Devil) was no longer able to arouse bitterness between them, as he used to do by reminding them of their different ancestries.

Some Of The Merits And Virtues Of Al-Madeenah

The city of Al-Madeenah gained honour and status once the Prophet ﷺ migrated to it, to the degree that it became superior to all places in the world, with the exception of Makkah Al-Mukarramah. Among Al-Madeenah's virtues are the following:

1) Its many Names:

It is a well-known feature of the Arabic language that, when one is important or honoured, one becomes known by many names; and this applies to people and things, and even to the Creator, Allah ﷻ, Whom Muslims acquaint themselves with by remembering His 99 names as well as their implications and meanings. Consider the great importance of the Day of Judgment and how it is mentioned throughout the Qur'an and *Sunnah* by different names. And we have hitherto discussed the various names of the Prophet ﷺ.

Now, among places, no city is known by more names than Al-Madeenah Al-Munawwarah; in fact, no city has even a quarter of the number of names that Al-Madeenah has, a statistic that at the very least underscores Al-Madeenah's status among the world's cities. Scholars have researched this issue and have counted as many as 100 names for Al-Madeenah.^[1] These names have been listed by the following scholars: Az-Zarkashee, in *Ai'laam Al-Masaajid Bi-Ahkaam Al-Masaajid*; Al-Maj Al-Fayroz-Aabaadee, author of the famous *Al-Muheet Dictionary*; Noor Ad-Deen As-Samhoodee, in *Wafaa Al-Wafaa Bi-Akhbaar Daar Al-Mustafaa*; and Muhammad ibn Yusuf as-Saalihee, in *Subul-Al-Huda War-Rashaad Fee Seerati Khair-il-'Ibaad*.

The Most Famous of those Names

a) Yathrib. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَا أَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَارْجِعُوا وَيَسْتَأْذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمُ النَّبِيَّ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ وَمَا هِيَ بِعَوْرَةٍ إِن يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ۝١٣﴾

"And when a party of them said: "O people of Yathrib (Al-Madeenah)! There is no stand (possible) for you (against the enemy attack)! Therefore go back!" And a band of them ask for permission of the Prophet ﷺ saying: "Truly, our homes lie open (to the enemy)." And they lay not open. They but wished to flee." (Qur'an 33: 13)

Al-Yathrib was the name by which Al-Madeenah was known prior to Islam; however, it is related that, at some point during the Madanee period of the Prophet's biography, the Prophet ﷺ forbade people from using the name Yathrib for Al-Madeenah. True, the word 'Yathrib' is used in the Qur'an, but only as part of a quotation, to relate what the hypocrites said.

b) Taabah. Al-Baraa ibn 'Aazib ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Whoever calls Al-Madeenah 'Yathrib,' then let

^[1] Refer to *Al-Hijrah An-Nabawiyyah Al-Mubaarakah*, pg. 155. This is the most important of reference books that deal with the virtues of Al-Madeenah.

him ask for forgiveness from Allah ﷻ; for indeed, it is nothing other than Taabah." According to another narration, the Prophet ﷺ said, "It is Taabah, it is Taabah, it is Taabah."^[1]

- c) Al-Madeenah, which is the most famous name for the city of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Madeenah in Arabic means city; but if it is preceded by the letters *Alif* and *Laam* (Al-Madeenah, or 'the City'), then it is automatically understood that, of all of the cities of the world, Al-Madeenah Al-Munawwarah is being referred to. In many Verses of the Qur'an, "Al-Madeenah" is mentioned. For example, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُّوا عَلَىٰ
الْإِنْفَاقِ لَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ سَنُعَذِّبُهُمْ مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّوْنَ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ
عَظِيمٍ ۝۱۱﴾

"And among the Bedouins round about you, some are hypocrites, and so are some among the people of Al-Madeenah, they exaggerate and persist in hypocrisy, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) know them not, We know them. We shall punish them twice, and thereafter they shall be brought back to a great (horrible) torment." (Qur'an 9: 101)

And in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَا كَانَ لِأَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ وَمَن حَوْلَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ أَن يَتَخَلَّفُوا عَن رَّسُولِ
اللَّهِ وَلَا يَرْغَبُوا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ عَن نَّفْسِهِ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُصِيبُهُمْ ظَمَأٌ وَلَا
نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَخَمَصُهُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَطْغُونَ مَوْطِنًا يَبْسُطُ الْكَفَّارُ
وَلَا يَنَالُونَ مِنْ عَدُوٍّ نَّيْلًا إِلَّا كَيْبَ لَهُمْ بِهِ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝۱۲﴾

"It was not becoming of the people of Al-Madeenah and the

^[1] Related by Ahmad (4/295) and Ash-Shawkaanee declared it to be weak in Fathul-Qadeer (4/268).

Bedouins of the neighbourhood to remain behind Allah's Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ when fighting in Allah's Cause) and (it is not becoming of them) to prefer their own lives to his life. That is because they suffer neither thirst nor fatigue, nor hunger in the Cause of Allah, nor they take any step to raise the anger of disbelievers nor inflict any injury upon an enemy but is written to their credit as a deed of righteousness. Surely, Allah wastes not the reward of the Muhsinoon (doers of good, i.e., those who perform good deeds totally for Allah's sake only without any show-off or to gain praise or fame, etc., and they do them in accordance with the Sunnah (legal ways) of Allah's Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ)." (Qur'an 9: 120)

The word "Al-Madeenah" is often made into a compound name when it is coupled with adjectives, such Al-Mubaarakah (the Blessed), Al-Munawwarah (the Illuminated), and Al-Musharrafah (the Honored); therefore, one says, "Al-Madeenah Al-Mubaarakah," "Al-Madeenah Al-Munawwarah," "Al-Madeenah Al-Musharrafah," or some other similarly apposite phrase.

2) The Prophet's love of Al-Madeenah Al-Munawwarah

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ invoked his Lord, saying, "O Allah, make Al-Madeenah beloved to us, (with a love) that is like, or greater than, our love of Makkah."^[1] And Anas ؓ reported that, when the Prophet ﷺ would come back from a journey and would see the walls of Al-Madeenah, he ﷺ would spur his animal to go faster out of love for Al-Madeenah.

Prior to the Prophet's migration, Al-Madeenah was known for its fever, which would particular hit those who visited it from abroad. 'Aishah ؓ reported that, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached Al-Madeenah, Abu Bakr ؓ and Bilaal ؓ fell ill (with Al-Madeenah's fever). And when Bilaal's fever would temporarily leave him, he ؓ would raise his voice and say, "O Allah, curse Shaibah ibn Rabe'e'ah, 'Utbah ibn Rabe'e'ah, Umayyah ibn Khalaf

^[1] Al-Hijrah An-Nabawiyyah Al-Mubaarakah (pg. 157).

– just as they have expelled us from our land (and forced us) to (go to) a land of plague.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said, “O Allah, make Al-Madeenah beloved to us, (with a love) that is like, or greater than, our love of Makkah. O Allah, bless us in our *Saa’* and our *Mudd* (measurements used for trade), and make Al-Madeenah well and healthy for us, and transfer its fever to Al-Juhfah.”^[1]

3) The Prophet’s special supplication for Al-Madeenah

‘Anas ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “O Allah, place in Al-Madeenah twice the blessings that You have placed in Makkah.”^[2] In another *Hadeeth*, Abu Hurairah ؓ said, “When people would see the first fruit (of the season), they would bring it to the Prophet ﷺ. Then when the Prophet ﷺ took it, he ﷺ would say, ‘O Allah, bless us in our fruits; bless us in our city; bless us in our *Saa’* (measurement that was used for trade); and bless us in our *Mudd* (measurement that was used for trade; one *Mudd* is equal to the amount of two handfuls, and one *Mudd* is one-quarter the size of a *Saa’*). O Allah, indeed, Ibraaheem is Your slave, Your *Khaleel* (a special honoured distinction for which Allah ﷻ chooses whomsoever He wills), and Your Prophet. And indeed, I am Your slave and Prophet. Verily, He supplicated to You for Makkah; and verily, I am supplicating to You for Al-Madeenah, with what is similar to what he supplicated to You for Makkah, and with it a supplication that is similar to it (i.e., the previous supplication).”

4) Protection from Ad-Dajjaal (the Antichrist) and from Plagues

Allah ﷻ charged certain angels with the duty of guarding Al-Madeenah, so that when Ad-Dajjaal appears on earth, he will not be able to enter it. In fact, when he will be outside of Al-

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Al-Madeenah’s Virtues, *Hadeeth* number: 1889.

^[2] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Al-Madeenah’s Virtues, *Hadeeth* number: 1885.

Madeenah, not only will he be prevented from entering it himself, but also his brother disbelievers and hypocrites inside of Al-Madeenah will be thrown out to him.

Al-Madeenah is also protected from plagues, for in the above-mentioned supplication, the Prophet ﷺ invoked Allah ﷻ to make it a healthy place. One of the obvious implications of that supplication is that the inhabitants of Al-Madeenah do not become afflicted with plague.

5) The Virtues of living patiently in Al-Madeenah

Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Al-Madeenah is better for them, if they were only to know! No one leaves it, desiring to be away from it, except that Allah replaces him – in it – with someone who is better than him. And no one remains steadfast through the harshness and difficulties of living there, except that I will be an intercessor – or a witness – for him on the Day of Resurrection."^[1]

6) The Virtues of Dying in Al-Madeenah

Ibn 'Umar ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Whosoever is able to die in Al-Madeenah, let him do so, for I will indeed intercede for the one who dies there."^[2] And 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ used to invoke Allah ﷻ, saying, "O Allah, bless me to die as a martyr for Your Cause (i.e., the cause of Islam), and make my death take place in the city of Your Messenger ﷺ."^[3] Allah ﷻ answered 'Umar's supplication, for 'Umar ؓ was martyred in the *Mihrab* of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, while he ؓ was leading Muslims in the *Fajr* (morning) prayer.

^[1] Related by Muslim, the Book of *Hajj*, chapter, "The Superiority of Al-Madeenah"; *Hadeeth* number: 1363.

^[2] Related by Ahmad (2/74, 104), with an authentic chain; and Ibn Hibbaan declared it to be authentic (3741).

^[3] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Al-Madeenah's Virtues, *Hadeeth* number: 1890.

7) Al-Madeenah is the gathering place of *Eemaan* (faith)

Al-Madeenah is a city wherein *Eemaan* (faith) gathers and gains strength; evil, on the other hand, has a weak and unstable presence in Al-Madeenah. Abu Hurairah ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Verily, Al-*Eemaan* (faith) enters (joins, unites in, gathers in, returns to) Al-Madeenah, just as a snake enters (joins, unites in, gathers in, returns to) its lair."^[1] And in another *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ said, "By the One Who has my soul in His Hand, none leaves it (i.e., Al-Madeenah), desiring to be away from it, except that Allah ﷻ replaces him – in it – with one that is better than him. Lo! Verily, Al-Madeenah is like the bellows: it removes filth. The Hour will not come to pass until Al-Madeenah expels its evil ones (evil inhabitants), just as the bellows expels filth from iron."^[2]

8) Al-Madeenah expels evil deeds

Zaid ibn Thaabit ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Verily, it (i.e., Al-Madeenah) is *Taybah*; it expels sins, just as fire expels filth from silver."^[3]

9) Allah ﷻ protects Al-Madeenah from those Who Plot Against it and its Inhabitants

Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "No one plots against the people of Al-Madeenah except that he dissolves, just as salt dissolves in water."^[4] And the Prophet ﷺ said in another *Hadeeth*, "Al-Madeenah is *Haram* (inviolable, sanctified), so whosoever practices in it a *Hadath* (a sin

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Al-Madeenah's Virtues, chapter, "Al-*Eemaan* Enters Al-Madeenah"; *Hadeeth* number: 1876.

^[2] Related by Muslim, the Book of *Hajj*, chapter "Al-Madeenah Expels its Evil Ones"; *Hadeeth* number: 1381.

^[3] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of *Al-Maghaazee*, chapter, "The Battle of Uhud"; *Hadeeth* number: 4050.

^[4] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Al-Madeenah's Virtues, chapter "The Sin of Those Who Plot Against Al-Madeenah's Inhabitants"; *Hadeeth* number: 1877.

or an evil deed that is not common and that is not recognized in the *Sunnah*) or gives shelter to a *Muhdith* (one who practices a *Hadath*), then upon him is the curse of Allah, the angels, and all of mankind; on the Day of Resurrection, neither obligatory deed nor voluntary deed will be accepted from him.”^[1]

10) Al-Madeenah’s inviolability

Based on revelation from Allah ﷻ, the Prophet ﷺ declared Al-Madeenah to be inviolable, and so blood is not shed in it, weapons are not carried inside of it, no one within it is to be frightened, its trees are not cut, and so on. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Verily, Ibraaheem declared Makkah to be inviolable and he supplicated for it, and I have declared Al-Madeenah to be inviolable, just as Ibraaheem declared Makkah to be inviolable. And I have supplicated for its *Mudd* and *Saa* (measurements that are used in trade), with an invocation that is similar to the one that Ibraaheem ﷺ made for Makkah.”^[2]

In another *Hadeeth*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “This is a mountain (i.e., Mount Uhud) that loves us and that we love. O Allah, Ibraaheem indeed declared Makkah to be inviolable, and I indeed declare inviolable that which lies between its Laabitai (Laabitai are the two rocky areas of land that border Al-Madeenah from its east and west; and so the Prophet ﷺ was referring here to Al-Madeenah).” And in yet another *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ said about Al-Madeenah, “Its fresh grass is not to be cut; its quarries are not to be repelled (or prevented from grazing); its lost items are lawful only for those who identify them (by announcing that they have lost them and by describing them); and it is not fitting for its trees to be cut, unless a man wants to provide feed for his camel.”^[3]

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Trade, chapter “The Blessings of the Prophet’s *Saa* and *Mudd*”; *Hadeeth* number: 2129.

^[2] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of *Al-Maghaazee*, chapter “Uhud is a Mountain that Loves Us and that We Love”; *Hadeeth* number: 4084.

^[3] Related by Ahmad (1/119).

These are some of the virtues that made the Prophet's Companions ﷺ become strongly attached to Al-Madeenah. They yearned to migrate to it, and once there, they wished to live in it. Once many strong believers were gathered and united in Al-Madeenah, they began to set their sights beyond its borders, working to spread Islam to the far corners of the earth.

THE NOBLE LIFE OF
THE
PROPHET
(PEACE BE UPON HIM)



BY
DR. ALİ MOHAMMAD AL-SALLABİ

"Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad (Pbuh) whom they find written with them in the Taurat (Torah) (Deut, xviii, 15) and the Injeel (Gospel) (John xiv, 16), - he commands them for Al-Ma'roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); he allows them as lawful At-Tayibat [(i.e., all good and lawful) as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.], and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khaba'ith (i.e., all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.), he releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allah's Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muhammad Pbuh), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur'an) which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful." (Qur'an 7: 157)